

Saturday February 14 1998

Abu Dhabi D 9.50	Greece D 500	Oman CR 1.00
Algeria FF 10	Hong Kong HK\$ 25	Pakistan PK 80
Australia A\$ 30	India INR 150	Portugal E 240
Belgium BF 95	Italy L 3,500	Qatar QR 6.20
Canada C\$ 50	Jordan JD 1.25	Romania US\$ 2.75
Denmark DK 17	Kuwait KWD 1.50	Saudi Arabia R 10
France FF 115	Lebanon L 2,000	Sri Lanka SL 250
Germany DM 3.90	Lithuania LT 200	Sudan SD 17
India INR 150	Malaysia M 2.70	Switzerland SF 3.50
Japan Y 100	Norway N 4.25	Taiwan NT 170,000
South Africa R 10	Poland Z 240	Thailand TH 50
Spain P 166	Portugal E 240	Turkey TL 170,000
Sweden S 10	Qatar QR 6.20	USA US\$ 3.50
Switzerland SF 3.50	Romania US\$ 2.75	Yemen Y 170
Taiwan NT 170,000	Saudi Arabia R 10	
Thailand TH 50	Sri Lanka SL 250	
Turkey TL 170,000	Sudan SD 17	
USA US\$ 3.50	Switzerland SF 3.50	
Yemen Y 170	Taiwan NT 170,000	



# The Guardian

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INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

## Spotlight

**Why are we still obsessed with Diana?**

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## Rugby Union

**Page 1 on the art of the hard man**

Sport, page 22



## Saturday opinion

**Why would anyone want to start a war?**

Catherine Bennett, page 9

# Sinn Fein on the way out

**Peace talks crisis after IRA killings**

John Mullan  
Ireland Correspondent

**S**INN FEIN appears certain to be kicked out of the multi-party talks on Northern Ireland's future after Ronnie Flanagan, chief con-

stable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, blamed the IRA for two murders in Belfast this week. The decision to exclude Sinn Fein, now regarded as the peace process into its most serious crisis yet, Sinn Fein is likely to be suspended for at least four weeks, a move

that will put pressure on the IRA's fragile ceasefire. Although the British and Irish governments are desperate to keep Sinn Fein on board, it was becoming clear last night that failure to remove it could provoke an Ulster Unionist walkout. Under the talks rules, that would make an agreed deal impossible. Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, confirmed that Mr Flanagan believed the IRA was involved in both killings. She said: "The integrity of the talks process and the commitment to exclusively peaceful means are para-

mount and all parties must be treated fairly and equally." The suspension of the Ulster Democratic Party three weeks ago set a precedent. It was told to go after the Ulster Freedom Fighters, the paramilitary group it spoke for at Stormont, admitted it had murdered three Catholics during the recent spate of sectarian killings. A flurry of telephone calls involving Tony Blair, President Bill Clinton and the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, is expected over the weekend. But there is a growing belief that there is little room for manoeuvre. The talks move

to Dublin Castle on Monday, where scheduled discussion on the composition and powers of cross-border bodies will be delayed. An IRA source said yesterday that its leaders had sanctioned this week's murders. He believed the rationale was to give Sinn Fein an exit strategy from the talks, which have failed to deliver for its increasingly frustrated supporters. An IRA statement on Thursday night that its "military cessation" remained intact was ambivalent, he said. One senior Unionist agreed: "When they are expelled, Sinn Fein can say they

remain committed to the peace process, and it's all the fault of the Brits for kicking them out. But it also allows them to turn around to the hardliners, point to all the position papers it has presented, and say 'We never sold you out.' Gary McMichael, leader of the UDP, said that Tuesday's murder of Bobby Dougan, an Ulster Defence Association member, was an attempt to provoke a loyalist backlash. That would have given Sinn Fein its get-out, he said. He added: "The talks process is going nowhere for Sinn Fein. There's nothing coming out of

this that they can agree with." There is an alternative view, that IRA hardliners carried out the attack on Dougan because their supporters were angry at the IRA's failure to protect Catholics during last month's loyalist killing spree. Dougan, buried after a paramilitary salute yesterday, was implicated in the violence, according to security sources. The murder on Monday of Catholic drugs dealer Brendan Campbell, aged 30, has been blamed on Direct Action Against Drugs, a front for the IRA.

Mark Durkan, an SDLP negotiator, said there was "incontrovertible" proof of UDF involvement in three murders before it was kicked out of the talks. That was based on its admission. He said: "If there is incontrovertible evidence, they [Sinn Fein] will have to go. If there isn't, I don't see how they can go." Mitchell McLaughlin, Sinn Fein chairman, said: "Let's see the incontrovertible evidence. They won't be able to do that. We will be at the talks on Monday, and the Unionists will try to have us expelled. It will be overturned. We do not expect to be expelled."

**'Mad hatter' judge quits after attack**

Clare Dyer  
Legal Correspondent

**A**JUDGE twice voted the worst on the High Court bench by lawyers has resigned after unprecedented censure from the Court of Appeal, which accused him of weakening "public confidence in the whole judicial process". Mr Justice Harman resigned on Wednesday after learning he was to be savaged by three appeal judges in a judgment delivered yesterday. He is thought to be only the second High Court judge this century to resign over his behaviour on the bench. Had he not offered to resign, it would have required a resolution of both Houses of Parliament to remove him, a step that has never been taken against an English judge. Unlike circuit judges, High Court judges cannot be sacked for incompetence or misbehaviour. Described by lawyers in a recent survey as "mad as a hatter" and "very unpredictable and nasty", Mr Justice Harman was a template for the public image of the out-of-touch judge, best known for asking "Who is Gazza?" and "Who is Bruce Springsteen?" The appeal judges were angered by Mr Justice Har-

man's treatment of a farmer, Rex Goose, who was bankrupted by a confidence trickster. He was kept waiting for 20 months before judgment was given, which the judges said was "inexcusable". The judge was found to have forgotten large chunks of the evidence and lost his notes by the time he delivered judgment, wrecking the farmer's chance of winning redress. The Court of Appeal ordered a rare retrial. A statement from the Lord Chancellor's Department said Lord Irvine was "extremely concerned" about the lengthy delays in giving judgment and "shares their concerns". The judge was recovering from hospital treatment and was not in court yesterday, but he will continue to hear cases until he steps down on April 20 on a full judge's pension of £36,000. Lord Justice Peter Gibson, who heard the appeal with Lords Justices Brooke and Mummery, said in his judgment: "The court is driven to take this exceptional course on the ground that a substantial miscarriage of justice would be occasioned by Mr Goose by allowing the judge's decision to stand." He said: "Litigation causes quite enough stress as it is... Compelling them to wait turn to page 2, column 8



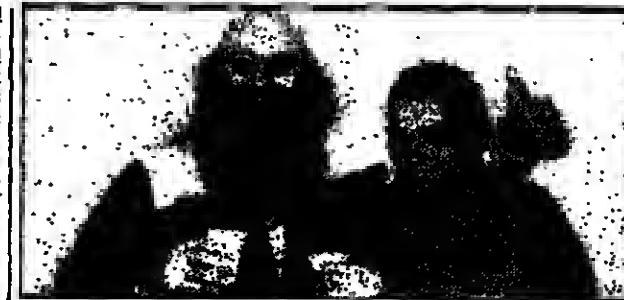
Sculptor Bryan Ellery with some of his Writers and Poets to be exhibited this month. Subjects include Lord Gowrie (top right) Ben Okri and Richard Ingrams PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN DOOWEN

**Long lost son meets his long-term dad**

Duncan Campbell  
Crime Correspondent

**T**HERE have been several happy stories recently about children being reunited with their famous parents they did not know they had. First, Clare Short, the Overseas Development Secretary, met the son she had given for adoption 30 years earlier. Then broadcaster Peter Snow was brought together with his own long-lost offspring. But there can be few stranger experiences than that of a 25-year-old Liverpoolian chief being informed that the father he had never known was the man described as "the most dangerous man in Britain". Charles Bronson, who changed his name from Michael Peterson, was jailed for seven years at the Old Bailey last October for taking

three hostages in prison and threatening to kill them if he was not flown to Libya. Aged 45, he has spent 21 of the last 25 years in prison and has been described as Britain's most disruptive prisoner. Originally jailed for robbery and aggravated burglary, he had received most of his sentences for taking hostages in prison or attacking fellow inmates. He has spent most of his time in solitary confinement because of his physical strength. Twenty-five years ago he became a father when his son, Michael, was born. But three years later, he and the boy's mother parted and he started the first of his long sentences. The boy's mother remarried when Michael was six, and became Mrs Dunroo. Then last summer, an old friend of Bronson, worried at his enraged despair, tracked down the son on Merseyside. Mike Dunroo said yester-



Bronson and son... the reunion in Wakefield prison

day that the news that his father was the chap with the ZZ Top beard who appeared in the press as the most dangerous man in Britain came as a complete surprise. He wrote to Bronson, then in prison in Woolwich, south east London, to say he would like to meet him. When Bronson appeared at the Old Bailey last October on hostage-taking charges, he pleaded guilty but explained that he now had a reason to live as he had just heard from his long-lost son. He told the judge: "It was on a mission of madness but now I am on a mission of peace. All I want to do now is get home and have a pint with my son." The two finally met in Wakefield prison. Mike says that he took to his father straight away. "I was a bit

guttled and I gave him a hug. He's sound and it was very nice to meet him." He said he looked quite similar to his father - "except for that beard, of course." He was impressed by his father's artistic abilities - Bronson has won awards in prison for his cartoons - and said art had been one of his own best subjects at school. He is hoping that, if his father can prove that he will not be taking any more hostages, parole may not be too many years away. Bronson is due to move to a special unit for difficult prisoners in Milton Keynes. He is delighted to be in touch with his son. He said in a letter last week: "It took 22 years to get him back in my life." When Bronson is released, the pair plan to open a restaurant called Bronco's. "I'll be the chef," said Mike. "And he'll look after the door."

**Gullit claims to be plot victim**

Paul Hayward  
Chief Sports Writer

**R**UUD Gullit was the victim of a long-term plan to replace him with Gianluca Vialli after players became disaffected with his aloof managerial style, and Ken Bates, the chairman, began to resent him as a rival, it was claimed yesterday. The club's board began plotting Gullit's downfall up to a month ago, Gullit said at a news conference yesterday. "They had everything planned behind my back." Gullit's demand for a huge salary increase was an issue but not the decisive factor in his sacking, sources said yesterday. It was felt that his assistant, Gwyn Williams, and coach, Graham Rix, were carrying too much of the workload.

The Week, page 24

## Gazza who?



lordship may have heard of," he replied. "I certainly have not heard of the band. I don't listen to bands."

□ At the height of the singer Bruce Springsteen's popularity in 1985: "Who is he - a pop star?" □ During the 1990 World Cup, while hearing an application for an injunction to halt an unauthorised biography of Paul Gascoigne, he was told Gazza was a footballer and asked: "Rugby or association football?" (He refused the injunction on the grounds that Gazza was not sufficiently well-known.) □ When Harrods was mentioned in a case, he said: "Harrods? I've always known it as Horrids."

## Inside

**Britain**  
EU officials in Brussels yesterday accused car makers of making "wild" profits in Britain.  
Page 4

**World News**  
Australia's constitutional convention endorsed a proposal to replace the Queen as head of state by 2001.  
Page 6

**Finance**  
The credit card was intensified as Barclaycard, the biggest player, cut interest rates and fees.  
Page 11

**Weather & Optician 7**  
Comment and letters 8  
Quick Crossword 12  
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Sport 16-24  
Crossword 24



**"More bodies found behind bank till."**

At Abbey National, our staff don't take their lunch hour between 12.30 and 1.30. A little good news for the front page.

**ABBEE NATIONAL**  
Because life's complicated enough.



# US public made ready for war

Mark Tran in New York and Richard Norton-Taylor

THE Clinton administration yesterday prepared the American public for a military strike against Saddam Hussein by saying the United States "must again summon the will" to respond to Iraq's defiance of the United Nations.

In what White House officials described as the definitive statement of US policy on the latest confrontation, the national security adviser, Sandy Berger, delivered a strikingly hawkish message, saying that the US was prepared to strike at will whenever it believed that President Saddam was trying to rebuild his biological, chemical or nuclear weapons.

The statement confirmed that the US alone is prepared to be the arbiter of Iraqi compliance with UN Security Council resolutions.

Mr Berger accused Iraq of seeking to undermine by every ruse the effectiveness of UN weapons inspectors. President Saddam has barred them from eight so-called presidential sites suspected of concealing material connected to germ warfare and chemical weapons.

In his address to the National Press Club, Mr Berger showed aerial photos indicating the huge size of some of the sites.

As if to prepare the US public for military action, General Henry Shelton, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, told reporters earlier: "We will

lose some people and that weighs heavily."

For his part, President Clinton said Russian opposition to force would not deter the US should diplomacy fail.

"The US is exhausting every diplomatic route. But we don't believe it is acceptable, if diplomacy fails, to walk away," Mr Clinton said.

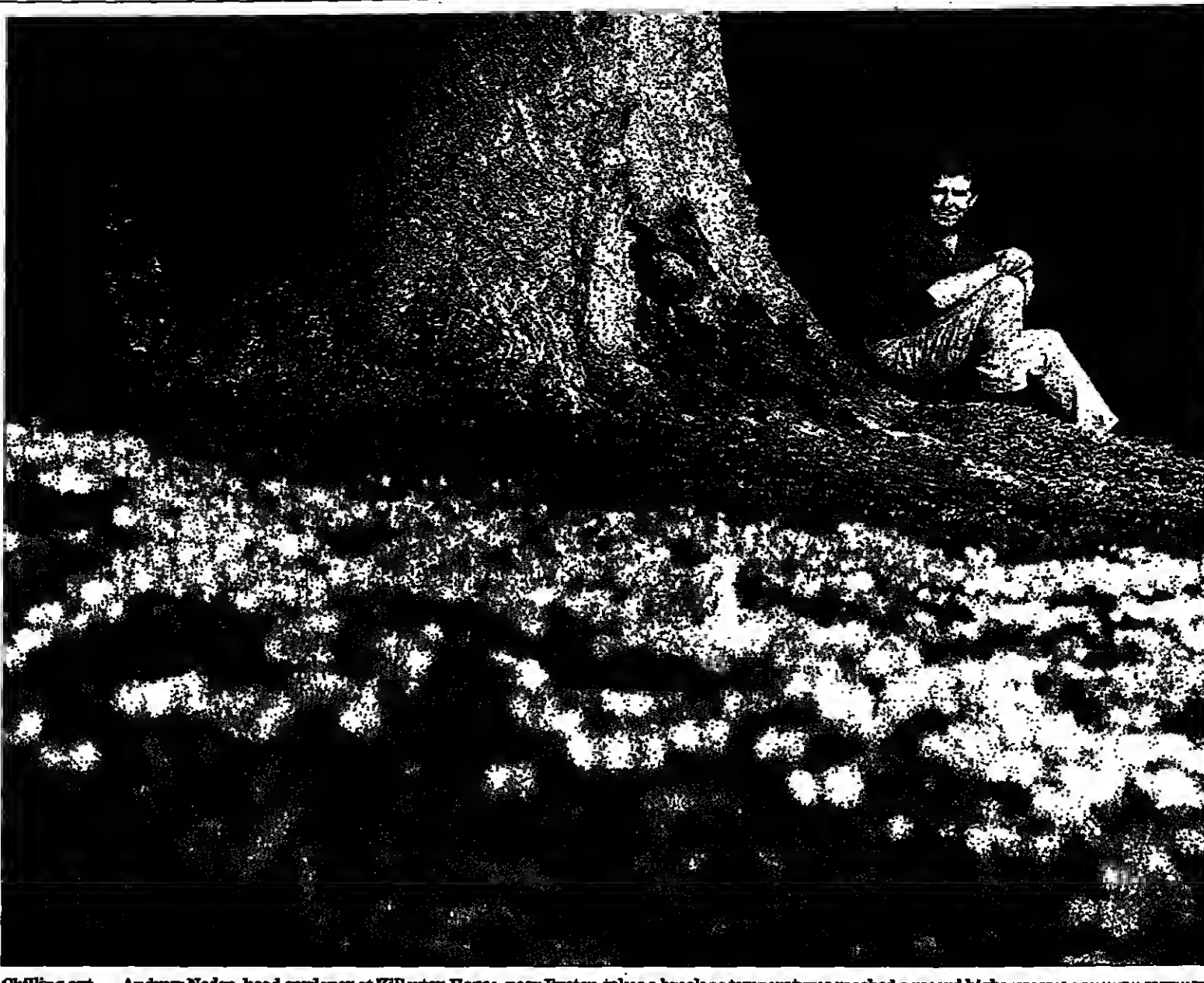
The unyielding talk in Washington overshadowed yesterday's diplomatic manoeuvring at the UN, where the five permanent members of the Security Council plugged away at attempts to forge a common position that would pave the way for a peace mission to Baghdad by the secretary-general, Kofi Annan.

Russia stepped up its pressure on Mr Annan to make the trip to Iraq. But whether he undertakes such a mission will depend on whether the five permanent members manage to agree on a common proposal for him to take.

With the US warning that military action is imminent — in a matter of weeks or days — discussions at the UN have taken on an increasing urgency.

Britain has come up with a proposal on the inspection teams that moves closer to Russian and French ideas. Already presented to the other permanent members of the Security Council, the proposal would allow UN inspectors, accompanied by diplomats, to visit the presidential sites. That way, the work of the UN Special Commission (Unscop) would not be compromised, while the presence of diplomats might assuage Iraq's sensibilities on sovereignty.

Disputed Nations, page 5; Martin Woodcock, page 9



Chilling out... Andrew Nodge, head gardener at Killerton House, near Exeter, takes a break as temperatures reached a record high. PHOTOGRAPH BY SAMANTHA PRITCHARD

Lucy Patton

LONDON was warmer than the south of France yesterday, and as temperatures hit a record high in other parts of the country hardy souls threw caution — and car-

dies — to the wind, hitting the beach.

Met Office experts said temperatures in Britain had reached the highest on record for February with 19.6C registered in Barbourne, Worcestershire.

In London thermometers peaked at 19.1C. The previ-

ous record of 18.5C was set in 1961. The temperature in southern France was 18C, while Bahrain could only manage 17C.

In Blackpool, ice-cream vans cruised the promenade as children built sandcastles on the beach. Some tourists even went back to

their hotels to change into summer clothes before joining thousands of others basking in the sun.

A Met Office spokesman said warm air from north Africa had raised temperatures to around 10 degrees higher than normal.

People were enjoying

warm, sunny weather across most parts of the country. In Devon temperatures reached 19.1C, Celsius. In Aberdeen it was 15C and in Manchester 14.6C.

The previous February record was set in Milford Haven in 1972 when temperatures reached 19.4C.

## 'Mad hatter' judge forced to resign after attack

continued from page 1

judgment for an indefinitely extended period after the trial is over will only serve to prolong their anxiety, and may well increase it.

"Conduct like this weakens public confidence in the whole judicial process. Delays on this scale cannot and will not be tolerated. A situation like this must never occur again."

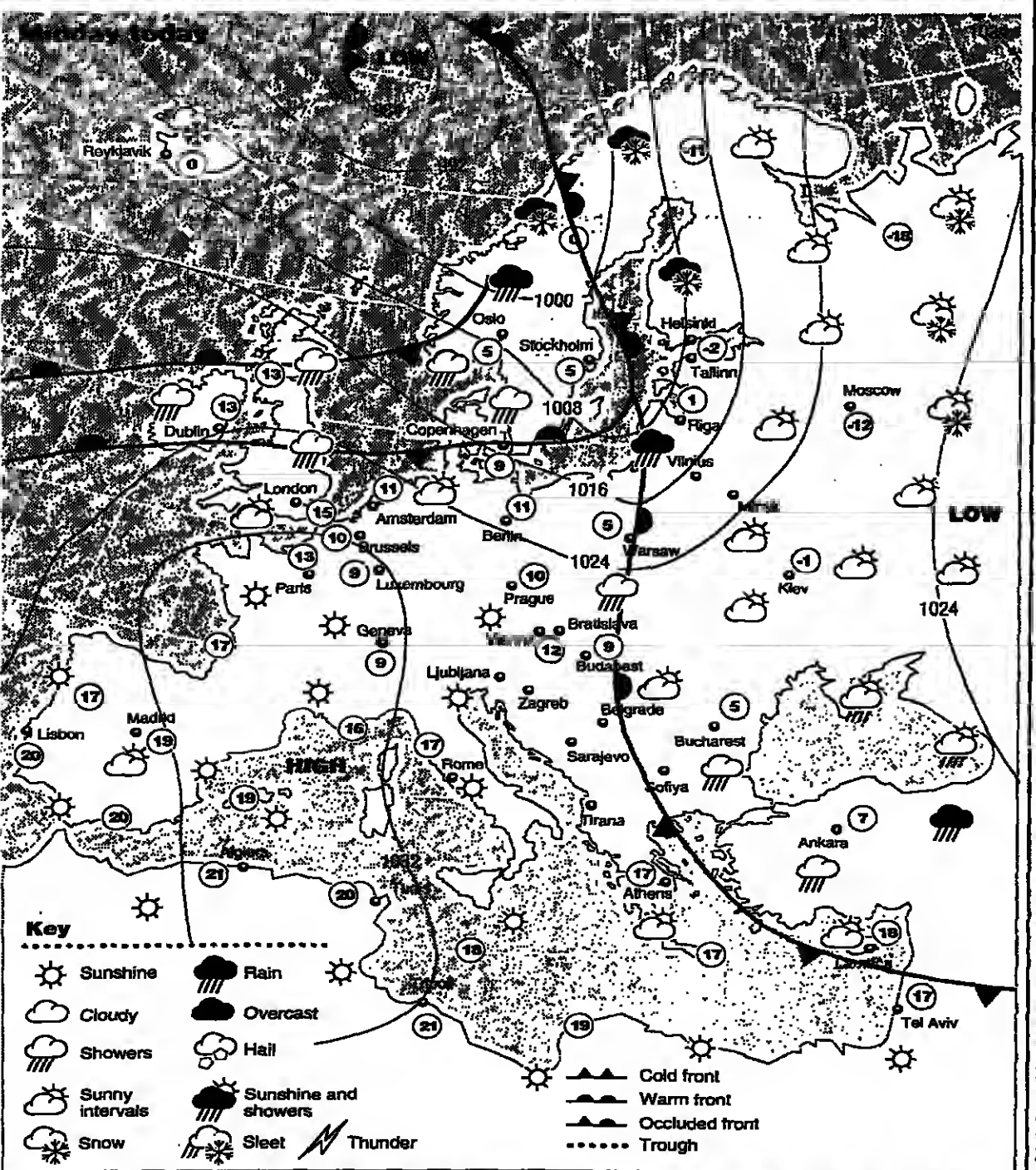
Sir Jeremiah LeRoy Harman — known to his friends as Jerry — is an Old Etonian and ex-Guards officer who became a legend in the law courts for his rudeness and unpredictability. In a survey this month of the best and worst High Court judges by the magazine Legal Business, lawyers described him as "so bad he shouldn't be there".

One barrister said yesterday: "He was always one of the nastiest, most incontinent judges. He was a loose cannon. If he was on your side, you could just sit there watching the other side being chewed up. If you had a case in his court, both sides would try to settle."

But lawyers acknowledged that he was highly intelligent. There were regrets that a colourful career had come to an ignominious end. A QC said: "Undoubtedly he has only himself to blame. He's done this too many times in the past and got away with it. But he was a distinguished lawyer and knew his stuff. The Chancery Bench will be a duller and grayer place without him."

The son and grandson of judges, Mr Justice Harman has been a judge of the Court's Chancery Division since 1982. His recreations are the traditional upper-class pursuits of fishing, shooting, staking and watching birds.

### The weather in Europe



### Television and radio — Saturday

**BBC 1**

8.30am Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe. 9.30am News and Weather. 10.30am Children's BBC. 11.00am The Big Game. 12.00pm The Big Game. 1.00pm The Big Game. 2.00pm The Big Game. 3.00pm The Big Game. 4.00pm The Big Game. 5.00pm The Big Game. 6.00pm The Big Game. 7.00pm The Big Game. 8.00pm The Big Game. 9.00pm The Big Game. 10.00pm The Big Game. 11.00pm The Big Game. 12.00am The Big Game.

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# Diana: the facts and fiction that fail to add up



Kamal Ahmed and David Pallister

ON THE night of August 31, 1997, a woman was killed in a crash while travelling in the back of a Mercedes limousine. The driver had been drinking. The car was speeding. There was no crash barrier to protect the vehicle as it slammed into a tunnel's concrete walls.

Facts? Two other occupants in the car were also killed. A fourth was seriously injured and cannot remember what happened.

Facts? There was another vehicle. Powerful people wanted the woman dead. Her Muslim boyfriend was causing concern in the higher echelons of the establishment.

Facts? A macabre trio dancing around the grave of Diana, the Princess of Wales. Ever since Henri Paul lost control of that Mercedes 280S the ingredients have been there: confusion, an incomplete investigation and a set of characters convinced that something, somewhere, stinks. The result is the rich soup of conspiracy.

Mohammed Al Fayed this week announced he is 99.9 per cent sure that Diana was not killed by accident. By extension, his son was murdered as well. It was a plot. By whom? Why? He has no answers.

In his tortured mind there is a macabre scenario. Deep in the upper reaches of the racist establishment, perhaps connected to the secret state, there were people horrified at their, admittedly wayward, English rose having a romantic attachment to the playboy Muslim son of a controversial father. Perish the thought, the man might even have become the stepfather of our future king. She had, had she not, already been the target of surveillance with those Squidgy tapes. Some people will stop at nothing and Mr Al Fayed's paranoia is undiminished.

There was an urge to have everything copper-bottomed from the outset, a desire to make two and two equal four. But with so many questions demanding answers, disappointment was inevitable. Accidents are terrible and final as this cannot just happen. The people cannot let it be so.

And so every fact has been worried over and reworked. Newspapers, TV, crews and Internet conspiracy theorists: all have played a part. The speed of the car, Diana's treatment, the mystery Fiat Uno; her claim that she knew she was going to be killed.

Take each by turn. The speed of the car. At first it was claimed that a roadside camera had snapped the Mercedes travelling at 122mph. The camera had been placed on the route the day before but then disappeared. Odd? No, the police insisted, there never was a camera there.

So Paul was driving more slowly? Maybe 80mph. Maybe 100mph. One of the endless

"informed sources" said no more than 60mph. Nobody is quite sure.

Was he drunk, then? Yes, said the police. No, said Mr Al Fayed. A third test said that it was irrefutable. He was drunk and he also had traces of an anti-depressant in his blood stream. All the tests gave different results.

Diana's treatment? According to the book, *Death of a Princess*, the clock had ticked well past 2am by the time her body arrived at Filité Salpêtrière Hospital. Slow, by anybody's reckoning. The ambulance did not race to the nearest hospital, but crawled along to one on the other side of the Seine. Four other hospitals were closer.

Mystery piled upon mystery. The French authorities explained that it is quite normal procedure to try to treat the victim of a serious car accident at the scene. They pointed out the princess's blood pressure was so low that the ambulance had to

travel slowly. Pitié Salpêtrière also had the highest level of expertise in the city.

The second car? A dark car. A light car. A Fiat Uno. A Citroën AX. Something swerved in front of the Mercedes and drove it off the road. It was full of passengers. Four, maybe? Two, then?

Yesterday, Al Fayed's own investigation — his security chief, John MacNamara, formerly of Scotland Yard, has teamed up with Pierre Ottavio, a French private eye formerly head of the criminal division — announced they had found the car, a white Fiat Uno which had been sold in November to a garage near Paris. It had been damaged on the left rear fender and had been repainted. More controversially, Ottavio said it had "belonged to a photo-journalist who was very interested in the Princess of Wales".

But last night French police were quick to quash the findings. The car "is of no interest to the investigation", a source said.

One helpful "intelligence source" said Diana's death was a textbook example of how secret services force accidents to happen.

Call it murder and there is a need for certain elements. Who had the motivation? Who had the opportunity? And who gained advantage from her death?

Again, take each in turn. Motivation: the establishment did not want the mother of the future king marrying a foreigner.

Opportunity: Diana's lack of security advisers and guards made her an easy target. The tunnel was an ideal spot for a "serious accident".

The state is in the frame on both counts.

And who gains the advantage? The state again, rid of a troublesome princess and now able to point a finger at those pesky foreigners who cannot be trusted to look after the state's assets.

In the world of mirrors that is conspiracy, the more outlandish it sounds the more it is evidence.

## Dodi baby claim woman arrested

Amelia Gentleman

THE mystery surrounding the woman who claims she gave birth to Dodi Fayed's daughter deepened yesterday when she was arrested at her home in Little Saxham, Suffolk.



Diane Holliday: questioned

A Metropolitan Police spokesman confirmed that "a woman was being questioned as part of an investigation into an allegation of financial deception carried out in December last year".

She was later hailed, to return to the police station in six weeks.

Diane Holliday, aged 36, shot into the public eye on Sunday when newspapers reported her claims that Mr Fayed had fathered her 15-month-old daughter Mariah.

The hotel consultant claimed she had become pregnant during a five-

month affair which began in late 1995.

Uncertainty was heightened by the revelation that the police were investigating apparently unconnected allegations made against Ms Holliday by Mohammed Al Fayed's rival, businessman Tiny Rowland.

## Icon still pushes up sales

Princess's face remains potent force, says Roy Greenslade



FREE Princess Diana video tribute for every reader

CONS do not die. They are worshipped for eternity in the temples of the media by an adoring public. So it is with Diana, Princess of Wales, the woman loved to death by newspapers, and now transformed into their patron saint.

Her face still sells, staring out from the news-stands and smiling from the magazine shelves, more enigmatic than ever but just as potent for circulation-chasing editors.

Broadsheets have unashamedly joined tabloids in the rush to satisfy the people's craving for a daily diet of Diana. Stories, pictures, investigations, promotions and all manner of diverse souvenirs enhancing the legend of Diana are guaranteed to do well.

The Times's serialisation of Thomas Sancton and Scott MacLeod's book *Death of a Princess* has added about 2 per cent to the paper's sales. The Mirror's interview with Mohammed Al Fayed this week, now on its third day,

has been avidly followed by other papers and news media. The Daily Mail's magazine on the life of Diana by the reporter who knew her best, Richard Kay, has boosted its Saturday sale by more than 400,000 for three successive weeks. The Mail is also offering readers a "fabulous" Diana video and Diana rose bushes.

The News of the World recently saw its sale rise by 330,000 when it published a 24-page magazine investigation into Diana's death by John Stalker. Hello! magazine's recent Diana issue sold 15 per cent better than normal.

Other attempts to cash in on her name have bordered on the tasteless. Among them have been stories headlined 'So did Diana really love Charles until the day she died?' (Mail); 'Di ecstasy tablets being sold in London' (Evening Standard); and 5 million calls to Di grave hotline (Mirror).

It has made little difference.

Short of saying something rude about the princess some six months after her death, the public don't mind what they get, as long as they get it. They appear to have adopted the role of the paparazzi they affected to loathe. They chase her image through every page, seeking out every reworked detail of her life, unconcerned at the ethics, such as the possible effect on her sons and the rest of her family. She is in death, as she was in life, public property.

Yet she is also a somewhat different woman in the eyes of those beholders. The split that existed in life between her and the royal family, a split which was then dividing the nation and engendering anti-royal views, appears to have vanished.

In life, she lost her royal status. In death, she is royalty once again. For the irony is that the beneficiaries of the new Diana cult are the royal family. Virulent attacks on the attitudes of the Windsors

during her divorce and immediately after her death have dissipated. Royalty is, dare I say it, chic once more.

To an extent, this has taken some newspapers by surprise. When the Queen Mother went into hospital for a hip operation a couple of weeks ago, the red-top tabloids did not make as much of it as their middle-market cousins, the Mail and Express. But they quickly caught up.

Prince Charles's tours are being covered with an enthusiasm not seen since the earliest days of his marriage, due in part to his advisers' good work, but also because papers detect that the heir to the throne fills the vacuum better than they first imagined. Their correspondents who virtually ignored the Prince of Wales once he parted from Diana are happily travelling the world with him again.

Even the Independent, for so long sceptical about the need for Palace coverage, came up with a royal scoop of sorts this week. It devoted more than two pages a day to "intimate and historic photographs from the private family albums of the Duke of Windsor". Not quite Diana. But it's only a matter of time.

Mark Lawson, page 9

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Ludovic Kennedy: Face to Faith



# 4 BRITAIN

## Pistol packing cowgirl wanted slice of action

Clare Longrigg

A COUNTRY and western fan who held up a pizzeria with a replica handgun was jailed for four years at Teesside crown court yesterday.

Delia Kirby, aged 29, had staged a late-night hold-up at a Pizza Express on Teesside. Staff were closing at midnight when the 4ft 10in woman, wearing a tassel cowgirl outfit and glasses, walked in. She had clearly spent too long in the saloon.

Staff told her the restaurant was closed, but she rummaged in a plastic carrier bag, produced a gun, and growled: "Give me the money from the till."

Sham Dodds, prosecuting, told the court that a waiter, Tahsin Bashir, 26, believed the gun was real, and tried to comply, but all he had to give her was £20.

Kirby took the money and left, but within minutes armed police arrived. Mr Bashir climbed into a police car and they gave chase. Kirby was picked up almost immediately and relieved of her gun while she protested: "Get off, that's my country and western gear."

Kirby, a single mother with a 19-month-old son and no previous convictions, told the court she had not planned the robbery. Her defence put her impulsive action down to the four pints of lager she had downed at the Alhany Social Club.

"It is an unusual case, if not completely bizarre," said Stephen Constantine, defending. "She can only blame it on the drink. She did not need the money and was not starving. She accepts that though diminutive she must have posed something of a threatening figure pointing a gun. But there is no malice in her."

Judge Leslie Spittle ordered the gun destroyed and told Kirby she would be made an example to discourage raids on vulnerable late-night premises.



Delia Kirby... country and western fan carried out late-night robbery on impulse

The Guardian Saturday February 14 1998

## British buyers have to pay up to 50 pc more than other Europeans

### Car makers 'cashing in' by inflating UK prices

Merthin Walker in Brussels

EU OFFICIALS in Brussels yesterday accused car manufacturers of making "windfall" profits and warned of legal action after figures were published showing that British car buyers are paying up to 50 per cent more for their cars than other European customers.

They invited British consumers "who wish to complain about such practices" to go first to the British competition authorities or directly to British courts.

British buyers pay the highest prices in Europe for 61 of the 72 best-selling cars. The Land Rover Discovery is cheapest in Britain, the site of its manufacture, where buyers pay 44.7 per cent more than Italians. The highest differential was the VW Polo, where buyers in Britain paid 54.3 per cent more than in Portugal, where prices were lowest.

The price differential, which EU investigators said was getting worse despite earlier warnings that it could breach EU competition rules, covered all types of car, from the most expensive Mercedes to the cheapest Ford Fiesta.

Cheapest car in each country (relative price to the cheapest car in each country)		
Country	Car	Relative UK price
Portugal	Ford Escort	148.9%
Spain	Ford Escort	148.2%
Belgium	Mercedes 320	143.7%
Netherlands	VW Golf	140.5%
Germany	Mercedes 320	140.1%
France	Renault 19	137.4%
Italy	Ford Escort	131.2%
Sweden	VW Golf	130.4%
Denmark	Mercedes 320	112.6%

The warnings now have real teeth after Volkswagen was fined £70 million last month for price-fixing, ordering its Italian distributors to restrict sales to German customers and to maintain lower prices for Italians.

As well as the differentials in prices, the EU Commission said that it was also examining whether British consumers were able to buy right-hand drive cars elsewhere in the EU, to take advantage of the lower prices.

A Brussels statement said: "The commission is receiving

continual complaints from British consumers who wish to purchase right-hand drive vehicles in the cheaper markets. The commission would remind manufacturers that under existing rules, right-hand drive cars must be made available throughout the EU to dealers wishing to sell such models."

Japanese manufacturers, who were praised for dropping their prices in Britain because of the rising value of the pound, still charged far more for their cars in Britain. A Toyota Starlet cost 43.3 per

cent more in the UK than it did in Belgium, the commission survey found.

The EU inquiry covered list prices of cars, which gave British auto industry spokesmen the opportunity to claim that these did not reflect the real sales price, where special discounts and trade-in deals and better packages of options were usually available. The figures were also distorted by different national tax policies.

The commission said: "In the Netherlands and Portugal, where such taxes exist, net car prices are the lowest for a large number of models. On the other hand, in countries like Germany and the UK, where no such taxes are due, prices tend to be higher."

It also served notice that the coming of the single currency would in most EU markets "put to the definitive test" the other standard defence of the car manufacturers: that currency movements helped explain the differential.

Only a handful of cars were cheaper in Britain than in at least one other EU market, including the Suzuki Swift, the Audi A4, the Opel Vectra and Citroen Evasion. In each case, British prices were higher than the EU norm.

## Photo-fit boosts hunt for killer

Jon Henley reports from Brittany on the hunt for justice

THE FATHER of Caroline Dickinson, the Cornish teenager raped and murdered in a French hostel nearly two years ago, yesterday made an emotional appeal to local residents to help track down his daughter's killer.

Standing outside the courthouse in Rennes to help publicise the first photo-fit picture to be released of the main suspect in the case, John Dickinson urged the people of Brittany in halting French to "please, please help us arrest this man".

Since 13-year-old Caroline's death on July 18, 1996, the family had lived "with the constant pain of her loss, together with the knowledge that her murderer walks free and could strike again at any

time," Mr Dickinson said. Close to tears, he said the man responsible must be made to answer for a terrible crime, committed against an "innocent young girl who could have been anyone's precious daughter".

Robert Baffert, a lawyer at the court where the investigation is based, said he was confident the photo-fit was a fairly precise picture of the man police are now seeking.

Caroline was raped and strangled while other girls from her school were asleep in the dormitory room at Pleine-Fougères youth hostel, near Mont St Michel.

Mr Dickinson said the picture was the best piece of evidence so far. "It makes me as confident as I've been at any

time in the last 18 months. If you look at the picture, it's a good picture — it's surely something someone will put a name to."

But he was sharply critical of the delay in issuing it, pointing out that the eyewitness statements it was based on — from two of Caroline's schoolfriends and a teacher who was with them on the trip — had been collected at the beginning of the inquiry but were ignored by Gerard Zaig, the investigating magistrate originally appointed to the case.

"I'm very angry at the delay and the mistakes that were made early on," he said. "The evidence was there from the very beginning."

Mr Baffert described the suspect as a man of European origin, between 5ft 10in and 6ft tall, of athletic build and broad-shouldered. Aged about 30, he had dark brown hair,

thick bushy eyebrows, a weathered complexion and a shabby appearance.

Justice officials have opened a French freephone number and the picture and detailed description will also be posted on a government internet site.

The Dickinson family launched several lawsuits in the first months of the investigation, frustrated by the inaction of Judge Zaig. He was removed from the case and replaced by Judge Renard van Ruynebeke, one of France's best-known investigators last August.

Mr van Ruynebeke widened the investigation, ordering a programme of mass DNA testing in the village, where genetic tests have since been carried out on all 422 males aged between 15 and 60 in an unsuccessful search for DNA samples matching those found on Caroline's body.

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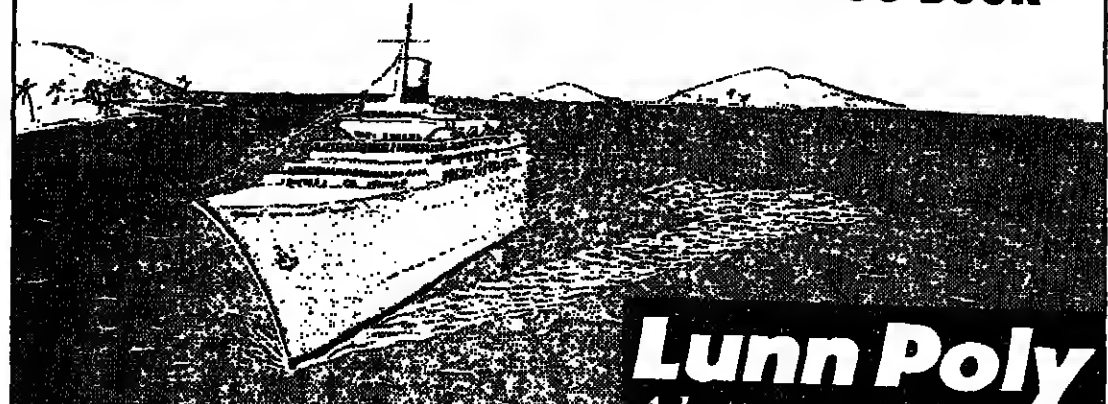
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# Man who's all things to all Mensch



Gerhard Schröder: Seen as a master of realpolitik

Lower Saxony's premier is turning the state poll into a dry run for the race to challenge Kohl, writes Ian Traynor in Osnabrück

**T**HE boogie-woogie piano rolled confidently from the stage, the free beer flowed, and the man who wants to lead Germany into the next millennium strutted confidently to the podium.

"The Kohl era is over," proclaimed Gerhard Schröder, launching himself into a deftly pitched 40-minute performance which he hopes will propel him to the chancellery in Bonn in September.

"Ah," grinned Heinrich Sprechmeyer, a retired steelworker, "Gerhard Schröder's

our man. He's a man of the people. He's the only one who can beat Kohl."

In front of 700 trades unionists and Social Democrats in a municipal hall in this northern town, Mr Schröder cleverly pined his Blairite message that, after 16 years of government by Helmut Kohl, Germany badly needs a change.

Mr Kohl's "contempt" for the working man and his cabinet of "dilettantes" had resulted in 8 million out of work, but national pride could and should reinvigorate the hugely successful post-war German model.

"We need to adapt, but there's little reason to throw away the things that made this country strong."

Mr Schröder is a self-made man. He was born into time poverty and ruin in 1944, the year his father died in the war. He and his siblings were reared by his mother, a cleaner.

Since 1990 he has been the Social Democratic premier of Lower Saxony. His Osnabrück performance was aimed at winning a third term in the state election on March 1.

It is a poll of much more than regional significance. Mr Schröder is locked in an increasingly bad-tempered feud with his party leader, Oskar Lafontaine, for the nomination to challenge Mr Kohl on September 27.

The Lower Saxony poll is

seen as a dummy run for September and could go a long way towards deciding the contest.

"It's a very personalised campaign," said Christian Wulff, the Christian Democrat challenger in the state.

"Politics here has been nothing but Schröder for the past eight years," complained Rüdiger Harms, the Green senior candidate. "Everything is subordinate to the Schröder fixation."

Mr Schröder is a master of realpolitik — all things to all men and women. He calls himself a pragmatist; his critics call him a shameless opportunist. His party is divided on his merits. But he is popular with the public and this is his trump card in claiming the chancellor candidacy.

Despite 15 years in opposition, the Social Democrats have performed wretchedly in a string of regional elections over the past two years, forfeiting up to 6 per cent of their vote.

Mr Schröder's pitch is that he is the only figure who can reverse that trend. He has hitched his fate to that of a divisive "us-versus-them" campaign and has opposed a "grand coalition" of Christian and Social Democrats in government.

Such an outcome in September, said Mr Schröder, could not be a strategic aim, but nor would it be "a national catastrophe".

The polls consistently show him as the figure with the best chance of unseating Mr Kohl. So the chancellor is campaigning hard in Lower Saxony, hoping to trim a Schröder victory and indirectly promote Mr Lafontaine, whom he beat comfortably in 1990.

Much will hinge on March 1, but all the signs are that Mr Lafontaine could yet steal the candidacy from Mr Schröder.

"Many to the party see Schröder as too rightwing, too business-friendly," said Karl Lutter, aged 71 and a party member for 35 years. "But I can't see a better candidate for the party and for Germany."

His other main claim — and the weapon he will deploy against Mr Lafontaine and Mr Kohl — is that he is the only politician capable of harvesting crossover votes from the Christian Democrats.

"Who can maximise our chances on September 27 and make victory probable?" he asked rhetorically. "The New Centre should be our slogan, forming an alliance of those ready and able to achieve things."

Mr Lafontaine, a man of the left, is seen as unable to attract the swing vote. Mr Kohl, too, has traditionally favoured a divisive "us-versus-them" campaign and has opposed a "grand coalition" of Christian and Social Democrats in government.

With the Greek Cypriots in the south and Turkish Cypriots in the north involved in an arms race, the mediators are keen to act before the deployment of a range of Russian anti-aircraft missiles bought by Mr Clerides last year.

The weapons, which are being assembled in St Petersburg, have added to mounting tensions between Greece and Turkey. Ankara has vowed to destroy the missiles if they are installed.

Mr Clerides is still regarded as the man best placed to protect the fragile peace in Cyprus. Some diplomats believe he has more room to manoeuvre than Mr Jakovov, a former foreign minister, who is also backed by hardline nationalists.

In private Mr Clerides says he is willing to make the compromises for a solution, especially one that would be associated with his name in perpetuity.

Unlike his rival, Mr Clerides has known the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktash, since the 1960s, when they led the intercommunal talks to unite the two island communities in a loose bizonal federation.

The Cyprus problem is 90 per cent solved, said one Greek Cypriot insider.

"What it needs is for someone to make the necessary compromises."

## Saving Italy from itself

### Private view

John Hooper

**L**AST Sunday 150 German economics professors signed an appeal for European monetary union to be postponed or restricted. The same day, in Italy, there was another dramatic episode in the Euro saga, but of a different kind.

To understand it fully you need to know about Domenico In, a popular television show. It begins as Italians are finishing their Sunday lunches and continues through an afternoon which traditionally brings together the family in homage to *la mamma*. Domenico In offers comedy, music, dance, quizzes and herds of scantily-clad, well-endowed females.

Last week it also offered the inebriated figure of Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, the treasury minister. He agreed to use the show to give ordinary Italians a say in the images to be put on the euro coins they will be using after January 1 2002 — provided Italy's partners overlook the little matter of a government debt 125 per cent of its gross domestic product.

The result astounded everyone: 15 million people phoned in. As doubt about the wisdom of having a single currency mounts everywhere else in Europe, Italians cannot wait to get it into their pockets. Why?

European monetary union, it is true, offers them the prospect of significant economic benefit. If — and it is quite a big if — the new currency is strong, it will mean low interest rates. And that will mean the Italian state can pay off its vast debt on the cheap.

Yet the potential drawbacks are considerable. By sacrificing their currency the Italians are sacrificing the right to devalue it or to allow it to depreciate against the currencies of the other states in the union. Yet devaluation and depreciation have been a useful way of occasionally enhancing the competitiveness of Italian business.

Though it may take an

effort, the enterprising, export-oriented industrialists of northern Italy will find ways to compete on grounds other than price, as indeed many have already done.

But what of the south, Sicily and Sardinia, with their dependence on government incentives and protection? Might not open competition with the rest of Europe split Italy even more decisively than at present? Might it not be that the north will swim and get still richer, and the south will sink and get still poorer?

It is one thing to imagine Turin in the same economic area as Dijon or Düsseldorf, quite another to think of Bari having to compete with, say, Gothenburg.

How much of this Domenico In's audience grasps is doubtful, especially since Italy's entry into Euro is scarcely a matter for debate. The lira is being carried at breakneck pace towards the euro on a swell of largely unquestioning popular enthusiasm.

It is only recently that commentators have publicly acknowledged the underlying reason: ordinary Italians want European integration for exactly the reasons that so trouble British Eurosceptics. Just as Bill Cash is appalled by the prospect of decisions being taken in Brussels or by the Bundesbank, Italians are delighted by it.

A history of coquest and occupation by other Europeans has perhaps made Italians more relaxed about rule from outside. But the key motive is their dissatisfaction with rule by other Italians. "Inside the Europeanism of the Italians there is a great need to be governed," Federico Rampini wrote in *La Repubblica* this week. "And if it is not only Rome that is to govern, but also the European Commission (and hopefully severe Germany) the whole thing seems more serious..." The British, French and Germans resist every cession of sovereignty to Brussels. We bless it as a way of protecting ourselves from ourselves.

That is a remarkable indictment of Italian politicians in the 128 years since unification. It is also a testament to Italy's immaturity and lack of self-confidence.



A young couple looks through the window of a Bucharest tram painted with hearts for St Valentine's Day. Romanians only started celebrating the day to any extent last year after a television station promoted it. PHOTOGRAPH: VADIM GERDA

## Cypriot talks hang on poll

Helena Smith in Nicosia

**T**HE presidential election run-off in Cyprus tomorrow should determine not only the political make-up of the island but the future of its long-stalled intercommunal peace talks.

Amid strong international pressure to solve the dispute, the poll has sent passions skyrocketing in a way rarely seen since the Turkish invasion in 1974.

Both Glafkos Clerides, the veteran conservative who is seeking a second five-year term in office, and his communist-backed challenger George Jakovov, acknowledge that the election outcome will affect the negotiations.

With the EU accession talks also due to begin next month, the future of the former British colony is also at stake. The talks could be put on hold if there are no compromises on either side.

The two front-runners are, therefore, conducting feverish campaigns, following their neck-and-neck first round last Sunday with an all-out effort to get vital votes. Last night their parties acknowledged spending more than £200,000 flying in more than 10,000 supporters from Britain and Greece for the ballot.

The scramble for support has intensified since the socialist Edeok party — whose support 10.6 per cent placed it as kingmaker after the first round — refused to openly endorse either Mr Clerides, aged 73, or Mr Jakovov, aged 59, in the run-off.

Mr Clerides squeaked to the post with about 2,000 votes in 1993. This time, in a week's intense political horse-trading, he has managed to secure the backing of four smaller parties, whose total vote exceeded 8 per cent in the first round. Some betting shops are giving Mr Clerides odds of 15-1.

International mediators, including President Clinton's senior trouble-shooter Richard Holbrooke, say they will be making their "big push" on the island once the new president is inaugurated later this month.

With the Greek Cypriots in the south and Turkish Cypriots in the north involved in an arms race, the mediators are keen to act before the deployment of a range of Russian anti-aircraft missiles bought by Mr Clerides last year.

The weapons, which are being assembled in St Petersburg, have added to mounting tensions between Greece and Turkey. Ankara has vowed to destroy the missiles if they are installed.

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The Cyprus problem is 90 per cent solved, said one Greek Cypriot insider.

"What it needs is for someone to make the necessary compromises."

Amman said this week. However, diplomats conceded that if Iraq continued to insist on a time-limit on the activities of inspectors there would be little room for manoeuvre.

The US, Britain, Russia, France, China — the five permanent members of the UN Security Council — and Iraq's Arab neighbours all claim the same objective — to rid Iraq of chemical and biological weapons.

British officials insist there is agreement among the permanent five on key principles. Unseen inspectors must have continuing access to Iraqi sites of their choice, no time-limit should be put on the inspections, and President Saddam should formally agree to them.

Washington and London engaged after hastily arranged visits to the Middle East this week that the use of force as a last resort was supported by many countries which were reluctant to say so publicly.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said that he was "heartened" by support from within the EU. While some countries were providing support for military preparations, "most of the rest are prepared to give political support for military action if diplomacy fails," he said.

France has refused to back military force, although it says it has the same objective — namely, to get rid of Saddam's chemical and biological weapons.

Germany, Spain and Italy have agreed to allow the use of US bases in their countries.

## Parisian brothel gets rubber stamp

Jon Henley in Paris

**T**HE French historic monuments commission has slapped a protection order on one of the finest surviving examples of a peculiarly Parisian form of interior architecture — the brothel.

"It is a unique monument to its time and well worth keeping out of the hands of the developers," said a commission spokesman.

"This was once a very important part of Parisian life, you know."

The anonymous, rather run-down facade and roof of the premises at 32-34 Rue Blondel in the 2nd arrondissement, once one of the largest and best-known

houses of ill-repute in the capital, are to be preserved for posterity, the commission has ruled.

But it also insists that much of the building's interior — particularly the large reception rooms on the ground floor, complete with its unusual period decor — must be maintained in its original condition.

Partially hidden by the waves of the present occupation, a clothes wholesaler, the "period decor" consists mainly of large oval mirrors in gilt frames; walls and ceilings in lurid turquoise, red and pink; and some notable ceramic tile frescoes portraying bar-breasted women in a variety of inviting poses.

The plush cloakroom and an ornate winding staircase that once led up to the bedrooms are also to be preserved, the commission has decided, as well as a discreet sign which reads "Aux belles ponies" — roughly translated, "To the beautiful broads."

Little is known of the clientele of the Rue Blondel. Like 1,400 establishments of its kind throughout France, and 180 in Paris alone, it was forced to close in 1947 under the Marthe-Richard law, named after a zealous Communist deputy.

But Maurice Rheims, now an eminent writer and member of the Académie Française, who remembers, as a young auctioneer, selling off the building's "eye-catching" contents, mourned the

passing of an era. "Just out of adolescence, nothing pleased me more than to go with my friends to one of these maisons closes," he said. "Each had its own character. Some were more literary, reminiscent of Manet, others more aesthetic, as you would find in Toulouse-Lautrec. They were fine days."

Greek archaeologists have unearthed what they believe is a 2,000-year-old brothel in the northern city of Salonika.

Among the artefacts found so far at the site, dating to early Roman times, are a clay phallus with a moveable section and a glass jar depicting Aphrodite, the ancient Greek goddess of love.

Baghdad is claiming this is another variant of the Soviet Scud missile, which Iraqi engineers have modified and which are supposed to have been destroyed at the behest of the United Nations.

The Iraqi minister was quoted by the Al-Hayat newspaper as saying the Scud's range was 80 miles — yet enough, Germany has agreed to loan 150,000 medical kits and Switzerland is offering 25,000 masks.

Two helicopter gunships carrying fleeing leaders of Sierra Leone's military junta were intercepted yesterday by a Nigerian warplane and forced to land in Monrovia.

General Timothy Sheldup, commander of the West African intervention force Ecomog, said the junta leader, Johnny Paul Koroma, was not

among the 25 officials aboard. The Ukrainian and Russian crews were arrested along with the Sierra Leoneans.

Gen Sheldup said the helicopters were trying to land at an airport outside Monrovia without clearance and were subsequently "escorted to land" at a different airport.

— Reuters

## Baghdad claims to have missile

### Arms

David Fairhall  
Defence Correspondent

**A**DEFIANT Iraq added to its confrontation with the United States yesterday by revealing the existence of what it claims is an entirely new ballistic missile.

The Iraqi foreign minister, Mohammed Said al-Sahhaf, told diplomats in Cairo the new missile had been "released into the Iraqi skies". He said it was called Samad — Arabic for steadfast — and it was "100 per cent Iraqi".

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Whether the missile is a new design or a cut-down Scud with a heavier warhead, its existence will complicate the UN inspectors' search for the remnants of Saddam Hussein's armory.

Of the 819 Scuds delivered by the former Soviet Union, all but two have been accounted for. But the Iraqis are believed to have built airframes and engines for two or three dozen of the 400-mile range Al Hussein derivative and extended-range Scuds.

It may still be hidden, possibly with chemical or biological warheads available.

With this threat presumably in mind, the Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said yesterday his government would ask the US to delay any military strike against Iraq until Israel had completed its defence preparations. The population is being issued with gas masks and medical antidotes to chemical and biological weapons, but there are not yet enough. Germany has agreed to loan 150,000 medical kits and Switzerland is offering 25,000 masks.



**The living Solzhenitsyn has become a kind of awkward, cantankerous ghost, haunting the great Solzhenitsyn-to-be of posterity.**

The Week cover story

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## Morocco's troubled succession

## King seeks unity as his son's legacy

David Sharrock in Casablanca finds the future uncertain

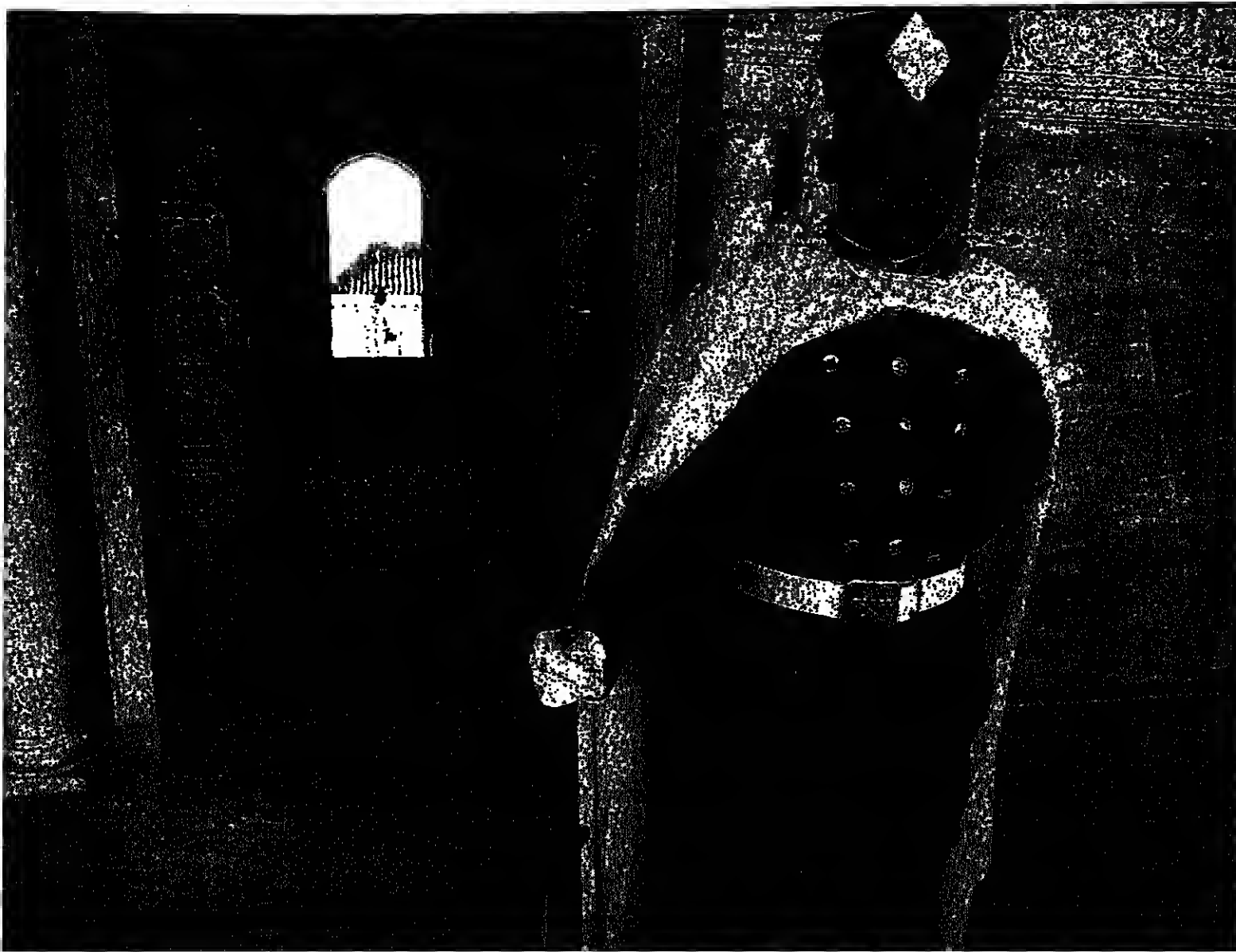
AT FRIDAY prayers the vast Hassan II mosque should be thronging with people, but in a small act of defiance its immense square is empty. A few hundred yards away a tiny and decrepit mosque is crammed full.

The Hassan II mosque, completed eight years ago at a cost of \$325 million — most of it borne by public subscription — is thought by some to be intended as King Hassan's eventual resting place.

"It is a beautiful building, but you don't worship inside a mausoleum," a Casablanca smiles.

The 66-year-old king, known as the Unifier, the Saviour, Commander of the Faithful, but more often than not simply as *Se Majesté*, is not yet ready for eternal rest. But there are signs that the question of mortality is weighing more heavily on his mind.

The succession may seem a simple matter. His heir is the 32-year-old Prince Sidi Mohammed. But to those who matter — Morocco's aspirant middle class and some in the ruling political elite — it is inconceivable that the *Makhzen* system of government, which has survived four centuries and long periods of colonisation by the European powers, will continue indefinitely.



The mausoleum of Mohammed V, King Hassan's father, in Rabat. A \$325m mosque may become the king's own resting place

PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

Under *Makhzen* — which gave Spain its word *almacen*, a store from which food and other benefits are distributed to the people — every facet of Moroccan rule leads back to the king through an intricate web of privileged bureaucrats.

"For more than 30 years he has played a good game," a diplomat comments. "But after so long everyone is wondering how much longer he will last and what will come after him."

After a serious illness and a damning World Bank report, the king embarked on a programme of constitutional reform — *la démocratie hasanienne* — culminating in last autumn's elections to a new bicameral parliament.

The king reserves the right to dissolve both chambers, but his enthusiasm for bringing centre-left opposition parties into government was seen as significant.

This month he finally ap-

pointed a prime minister, Abderrahmane El Yousoufi, leader of the Socialist Union of People's Forces, the first opposition figure to head the government in Hassan's 37 years as king.

It is another cautious step

Parked outside the home of Fathallah Arsalane in a Rabat suburb. The is an unmarked vehicle of the secret police. Mr Arsalane is number two in the Islamist Justice and Charity movement, whose leader, Abdessalam Yassine,

"There is a profound crisis here. The problem we face is that we are always waiting on His Majesty to do something"

towards preventing what the king recently referred to as the danger of an "explosion" in Moroccan society as the gap between the haves and have-nots widens further.

The "explosion" which most Moroccans fear has already taken place in neighbouring Algeria, and its experience serves as a political reminder of what may happen here.

has been under house arrest for the past eight years.

Although another Islamist party contested the elections, Justice and Charity boycotted them. It has a strong and disciplined following in the universities and, according to some estimates, the support of 10,000 youngsters in the cities.

Mr Arsalane presents himself as a moderate, steering

away from overt criticism of the king, prudently offering no hostages to fortune by publicly admiring Islamic models of government, such as that in Iran. His message is national renewal through dialogue.

"There is a profound crisis here, social, political and economic, an accumulation of factors which began with our independence," he says.

"There is no credibility to the latest political game. There is no political will to change this country. The problem we face is that we are always waiting on His Majesty to do something."

The silent majority plays no part in politics here, which is why we need a national dialogue. This artificial fabrication of a parliament has only deepened the crisis."

He doubts Morocco could ever descend into an Algerian-style civil war. "What we might have is more like an intifada, such as the Palestin-

ians have waged. But the danger is that the crisis is so deep that it could get out of control."

By remaining outside King Hassan's "political game", Justice and Charity claims — in the face of a party political system whose leadership has barely changed in 30 years — to be the real opposition.

In a country where 40 per cent of the people live on less than \$1 a day and youth unemployment touches 25 per cent, such a stance may suggest that it is only a matter of time before Morocco explodes.

Mr Arsalane dreams of bequeathing to his son a stable monarchy, a state where his grateful subjects will pray on Fridays at the Hassan II mosque instead of crossing the road.

And a state where he will no longer need to lock the doors to the smaller mosque — and all those like it scattered across Morocco — at the end of every prayer session.

## Sonia Gandhi gives Congress last-minute fillip

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi

INDIA'S mightiest political force, the rightwing Hindu, Bharatiya Janata Party, is facing panic in its ranks as opinion polls show that power is slipping from its grasp in the final days before voting starts in the general election on Monday.

Until a few weeks ago the BJP appeared to be steam-rolling towards victory in the elections which will span four days. But the night of the party has been dissolved by the appeal of the latest claimant to the family dynasty that has ruled India through 50 years of independence: Sonia Gandhi.

An opinion poll to be published in India Today magazine at the weekend gives the BJP and its allies their lowest tally yet: 214 seats in the 543-seat parliament. Mrs Gandhi's Congress party and its allies are given 164 seats, and the United Front coalition of the fallen prime minister I. K. Gujral 127 seats — enough for a coalition government should the quarrelling forces unite.

The poll is a dramatic assessment of the BJP's fortunes since Mrs Gandhi entered active politics. Two other surveys also show that Mrs Gandhi, though elusive and a poor public speaker, is winning back support for her divided and demoralised party.

The BJP was also stung yesterday by calls for its president, Lal Kishan Advani, to withdraw from the electoral

fray after a watchdog panel included his name among 72 criminals contesting these elections. Mr Advani faces charges of incitement in connection with the destruction of the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhya five years ago.

The BJP has responded to the findings by stepping up its plea for a majority verdict, claiming it is the only party capable of providing stable government in a country undergoing its second election in less than two years. Privately, however, party leaders were huddled in crisis meetings earlier this week at the Delhi home of its prime ministerial candidate, Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Yesterday Mr Vajpayee abruptly abandoned plans to address a big rally near Varanasi, leaving thousands of supporters waiting while he held another crisis session.

Mr Vajpayee, an urbane poet who has cultivated a statesmanlike image, is the most popular candidate for prime minister, dwarfing the ratings for Sonia Gandhi and Mr Gujral. But his party has been unable to shake off its association with upper-caste and puritanical Hindu hardliners who are seen as foes of the Muslims, the Dalits (formerly untouchables), and women.

But according to a Times of India poll yesterday, the BJP is on course for 250 seats, which could bring it to power, given enough allies for a coalition. It has been struggling to broaden its base, making pre-election alliances with regional parties.

## Nasa maps reveal ancient temples in Cambodian forest

Nick Cumming-Bruce in Bangkok

AMERICAN space-age radar and British archaeological expertise have together unearthed ancient temple sites in western Cambodia.

The discovery announced by Elizabeth Moore, head of art and archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, promises a revision of the history of Angkor, one of the world's richest archaeological treasures.

Radar images produced by a DC-8 aircraft of the National

Aeronautics and Space Administration revealed a circular mound near the 12th-century Angkor Wat, discovered by a French traveller nearly 140 years ago, which is one complex among several palaces, temples, tombs, terraces and fortified walls in an area of 77 square miles.

Angkor is seen as a gem of Khmer civilisation between the 9th and 13th centuries. But Ms Moore found evidence of a city that predated it by up to 300 years.

Six more temples with Hindu deity images, including one as high as a football stadium, have also been found.

## Australian PM gives green light to referendum

## Republicans back proposal as convention wants a deal

Christopher Zinn in Sydney

REPUBLICANS and monarchists were both claiming victory last night after the constitutional convention finally endorsed a proposal to replace the Queen as head of state by the year 2001.

After two weeks of talking, the proposal put forward by the Australian Republican Movement (ARM) — that the head of state should be a president chosen by parliament — was passed by 73 votes to 57, with 22 abstentions.

The result was four votes short of the absolute majority which the prime minister, John Howard, had said was required before the plan could be tested by a binding referendum to be held next year.

But Mr Howard said he favoured a referendum none the less. The majority of delegates had, he said, voted "generally" for a republic, even if they were divided on whether the people or parliament should elect the president.

"It would be a travesty, in common sense terms, of Aus-

## Farrakhan visit arouses protests

THE American black Islamist leader Louis Farrakhan's expected arrival in Australia today to hold talks with Aboriginals and Muslims has caused a storm of protest, writes Christopher Zinn.

Mr Farrakhan was given only a six-day visa after he guaranteed that he would

not use racist language. Local Jewish groups tried to stop his entry.

Mr Farrakhan, who is accused of inciting racial hatred between blacks and whites, and calling Jews "bloodsuckers", plans to meet a tiny community of part-African Aboriginals around Alice Springs.

The Tasmanian monarchist David Mitchell said: "We may well say, 'God save the Queen', for nothing will save the republic."

The proposal got a smaller majority than expected at the convention because some republicans who want a president elected by direct popular vote sided with the monarchists.

"We're very pleased with today's result," said Kerry Jones, of Australians for a Constitutional Monarchy.

"We're delighted we're going to stop wasting taxpayers' time and money, and move through to a real referendum ... to fight against this Turnbull model which doesn't measure up to the safeguards of our current constitutional arrangements."

Before the vote one ARM delegate, Eddie McGuire, summed up the thoughts of many Australians in a rallying call to the chamber.

"This is the vote which tells the prime minister that republicans want a republic and gives our people something to vote on. It's taken 100 years to get this far. Who knows when we'll get another crack at it?"

nominate a presidential candidate who must then win the support of two-thirds of federal MPs.

The ARM chairman and architect of the deal, Malcolm Turnbull, said he was sure Australians wanted a head of state chosen with the bipartisan support of parliament.

"I think this is a very important day ... We're one step closer to a republic, but I think on this occasion we've taken a couple of steps with one leap," he said.

All sides realise that the referendum campaign will be tough. The proposal must be supported by a majority of Australians in a majority of the six states.

likely to form almost half the state's population by 2030. They will soon outnumber blacks in New York.

Blacks at present make up about 13 per cent of the US population, compared with the Hispanics' 10 per cent.

But, with birth rates among blacks and whites slowing down or levelling off, the number of Hispanics is about to exceed blacks in about 2008.

The ramifications of the increase are already being felt in some areas of Califor-

nia, Texas and Florida, where Spanish is almost the dominant language.

The Hispanics' growing presence has prompted moves to eliminate affirmative action in California and Texas and to tighten immigration controls on the Mexican border.

The study, conducted by the National Centre for Health Statistics, shows that the problems facing the Hispanic community increasingly mirror those encountered by blacks.

## Hispanics 'largest US minority'

Gary Young in Washington

FURTHER evidence that the racial landscape of the United States is being transformed emerged yesterday in a study revealing that the number of babies being born to Hispanic women has reached a record high.

The report, which shows a 28.5 per cent rise in the birth rate in the Hispanic community, hastens the day when Hispanics will become

the country's biggest minority. They should overtake the number of African-Americans before 2010.

Immigration and a high birth rate have already made the Hispanics — people originating from Mexico, south and central America, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic — the biggest minority in Los Angeles, Houston, Phoenix, San Antonio, Miami and El Paso. They make up a quarter of the inhabitants of Texas and are

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Monica Edwards

# A child of land and sea

**M**ONICA Edwards, who has died aged 85, will be remembered by those who were teenage readers 30 years ago. The latest *Romney Marsh* or *Punchbowl Farm* story was eagerly seized upon by young people anxious to follow the further exploits of Tamzin, Rissa, Roger and Mervyn, or of Dion and Lindsey Thornton.

Monica Edwards's first book, *Wish for a Pony*, appeared in 1947 and immediately appealed to devotees of "horse" stories. But, as she also developed her characters, she tackled such important subjects as a lifeboat disaster in *Storm Ahead* (1963), rescuing oil-seekers in *Operation Sealord* (1967), and the threat to the livelihood of the Rye Harbour fishermen in *The Nightbird* (1965).

In this canon, a Romney Marsh story was always preceded by one set at Punchbowl Farm. The Romney Marsh stories, featuring the vicar's daughter, Tamzin Grey, and her friends, were based on Monica's own childhood, when children were free to roam and explore without adult supervision. The maps in the books were faithful to the area and included Rye (Dunford) and Winchelsea (Winklessea). The Punchbowl Farm stories reflected her farming days near the Devil's Punch Bowl in Thurstley, Surrey.

She and her illustrator, Geoffrey Whitman, had an excellent relationship and he usually saw the latest manuscript before her publishers. Although few readers enjoyed the lifestyle of her fictional heroes and heroines, they could relate to her characters in much the same way as lovers of Arthur Ransome's

books related to his young adventures. She created real people, not cardboard cutouts.

In addition to her books for children, Monica Edwards wrote five autobiographical books for adults, chronicling her life after she bought Punch Bowl Farm in 1947, the purchase of which was as accidental as the version in *Black Hunting Whip* (1950).

The last of the adult books, *The Valley and the Farm* (1971) described her husband's tractor accident in 1958, which made the sale of the farm inevitable.

Monica Edwards was born in Belper, Derbyshire, one of the four children of the Rev Harry and Beryl Newton. Her father was somewhat absent-minded, frequently forgetting his children's names, and no one seems to have noticed that Monica missed nearly a year of school after the family moved to Rye. She spent many hours with local fishermen absorbing their yarns and storing them away in her memory, to be brought out again years later in her books.

In 1933, she married a Rye man, Bill Edwards. They shared an interest in the countryside and, after they moved to Punch Bowl Farm, her husband took to farming as though born to it. Monica had a keen interest in wildlife, spending many nights watching and photographing badgers and keeping meticulous notes. Animals played an important part in all the books: cats and dogs, as well as the horses, and, in one work, *The Wild One* (1967), an escaped puma. In 1960, one year I first met her, Monica was voted Children's Author of the Year by Foyle's Children's Book Club, jointly winning the award with Capt W E Johns, of *Biggles* fame.

After the sale of the farm, Monica and her husband moved to a smaller house in the valley, but retained 12 acres of woodland which is left to the Woodland Trust. Bill Edwards died in 1990 and, although Monica's failing eyesight deprived her of one of her greatest pleasures, reading, she was still able to enjoy her walks through the valley. She leaves a son and a daughter.

Susan Dickenson

Monica Edwards, writer and countrywoman, born November 8, 1912; died January 10, 1998

## Letters

**Nathane Arnaudis writes:** I was a close friend of Martin Bayer (obituary, January 19) for 35 years and trained as a solicitor under him at Birkbeck Montagu. He afforded many young people the opportunity of entering into the law and was always wise, supportive and encouraging. It was therefore galling when one of his erstwhile articulated clerks claimed to be the Mr X who had done all the work for the International Defence and Aid Fund, whereas all he had done was to run messages for Martin. Martin was philosophical about putting the record straight, which was typical of his self-effacement and modesty.

**Drusilla Sutherland writes:** I was interested to read your obituary of Richard Berger (January 9), which concentrated solely on his career and fame as the author of M.A.S.H. My family knew

him solely as a doctor, when we lived in Maine during the 1950s-1960s; he was considered one of the best surgeons in the Waterville area for many years. He was my father's doctor and performed a major stomach operation on my dad back in 1958, saving his life. My mother claimed that Donald Sutherland (in the film) resembled him somewhat, but, as always, fiction takes over from fact.

**Frank Carpenter writes:** After reading your obituary of Klaus Fennert (January 19) I spent the evening listening to his masterly interpretation of Mahler's 5th Symphony, played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra back in 1979. Clearly they were inspired by his subtle directions, both in volume and tempo, which still come over well on my EMI LPs. A sad loss, but thank goodness for recording technology.

## Richard Cooper

# Young in mind and vision

**R**ICHARD Cooper, who has died aged 67, was an award-winning writer for children's television. His work was intelligent and thought-provoking. He believed that children were an all-important audience, which deserved to be treated seriously.

He was born in Warrington and educated firstly at Booter grammar school and later at Esme Church's Northern Theatre School. He then worked in the theatre as an actor, director, adjudicator and drama festival administrator. In 1964, he took a teaching post at St Mary's College of Education in Northumberland.

It was while Cooper was at St Mary's that he began to write, initially stage plays, many of which were performed at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. His early profes-

sional work was for the Northumberland Theatre Company and the Newcastle Playhouse, for which he wrote *All Change*, with CP Taylor, who was very much his mentor, and Alex Glasgow.

His first completed work for television was a children's adventure series, *Quest for Eagles*, commissioned by Type Television, and set amongst the Polish community on Tyneside. It was at this stage of his career that I first met Richard Cooper, at a memorable lunch at the Oyster Bar in Edinburgh, during the festival. As a result of our meeting, I commissioned his first work for the BBC, *Code Name Icarus*, a thriller based on the idea of exploiting gifted children.

Other commissions for children's television followed: *Knights of God*, a 13-part series for TVS, was a political thriller, set in the year 2020, which used the Arthurian legend as a framework to explore the nature of power and dictatorship. In 1983, Cooper won the Writers' Guild Best Children's Award for his series *The Eye of the Storm*. His major work for adult television was *Shadow of the Moon*, an eight-part series for BBC3 based on the life and cases of Sir Edward Marshall Hall.

**C**OOOPER will be remembered by his many friends for his intellect, wit, kindness and his faith (he was a convert to the Catholic Church). The picture of Richard, which I will remember, is of him sitting with a glass at his side (wine or beer), constantly tamping at his often unit pipe and talking. He was a fine talker, a great

listener and a mentor to many people. Working on a project with him was always a treat. He enjoyed discussing his early draft, arguing and re-working and, unlike many other writers, he welcomed the input of producers and directors.

Latterly Richard, and his wife Mariene, lived in a village in the Charente, in France, where he was soon adopted by the local community. He was always supported by his wife and his family, six children and nine grandchildren. His last work for television, an adaptation with Peter Tabern of Captain Marryat's *Children of the New Forest*, will be broadcast by the BBC later this year.

Anna Home

Richard Fairhurst Cooper, writer, born April 5, 1930; died February 2, 1998



Officers and gentlemen... this study of US soldiers dancing at West Point Military Academy in 1957 was one of many celebrated photographs taken by the French photo-journalist Pierre Boulat, who has died, aged 73. During a 23-year career with Life magazine — launched in 1953 with a dramatic picture of a tornado hovering over Paris — he covered the Algerian war and the Suez crisis, and produced incisive portraits of, among others, Aristotle Onassis, Arthur Rubinstein, Duke Ellington and Federico Fellini. He also chronicled 30 years of Yves Saint Laurent creations.

## Appreciation: Lesslie Newbigin

Martin Conway writes:

**Y**OU put my name under your obituary of Bishop Lesslie Newbigin (February 7) along with that of the late Christopher Driver, no doubt because you were using a couple of quotations from things I have written in earlier years. I should have wished you also to stress in the obituary these three dimensions of his long and immensely influential life:

1. Overall appreciation: Lesslie Newbigin was one of the few church leaders this century of whom it deserves to be said that they reshaped the obedience of the world-wide Church. No-one, except possibly his long-standing companion, Dr W A Visser't Hooft, has done more to make the World Council of Churches into such a key force for new vision and new reshaping throughout the world.

2. A giant intellect having, as a young man, thrown himself into the life and commitments of the Student Christian Movement between the wars, Newbigin maintained into his last days an eager commitment to truth, and therefore to following through the appropriate arguments, whether with other Christians (typical that his first book should be a debate with no less a figure than John Middleton Murry), with leading thinkers of the past (at his funeral one friend saw him now preparing to tackle Descartes, Locke and Kant) or with the *Zellgeist* of the West (whether under Reagan/Thatcher or Clinton/Blair).

3. The missionary: throughout his adult life, Newbigin knew his first calling and joy to be that of making Christ known, and expressed how actual and how actual people, not least the poorest, would appreciate his challenge and promise.

Yet he was always just as conspicuously a modest, gentle and humorous man, composing limericks out of tongue-twisting names to while away the sleepless hours, never concerned for his own prestige, but simply for the well-being of his neighbours and for the life-and-hope-giving truth that God has made known once for all in Jesus Christ.

## Junior Kimbrough

# Back to basic blues

**"H**E'S the beginning and the end of music," the rockin' blues artist Charlie Feathers once said of the blues singer and guitarist Junior Kimbrough, who has died aged 67. His byzantine tumbling strains seemed to drift down to our ears, as if from a far-off pre-war blues.

That makes him sound like the sort of bluesman who is "discovered", usually adored in years, playing his memories while the musical mainstream flows indifferently past. But Kimbrough had an enthusiastic audience for two decades in his own community, the countryside around Holly Springs in northern Mississippi, where he spent his entire life.

He had experienced a whiff of discovery in the late 1970s, when his song *Meet Me in the City*, informally taped by a visiting English blues enthusiast, Anthony Wall, was played in Charlie Gillett's Radio London show *Honky Tonk* and issued on the album *The Honky Tonk Demos*. Even

Tony Russell

David (Junior) Kimbrough, blues musician, born 1930; died January 18, 1998

## Face to Faith

# The state the Church is in

Ludovic Kennedy

**F**OR MORE than 400 years the Church of England has been subservient to the state, as was demonstrated again recently when Tony Blair exercised his prerogative as Prime Minister to reject both the candidates put forward for the bishopric of Liverpool, and the whole question of the relationship between Church and state. Disestablishment, or not, is once again in the melting pot.

The Prime Minister, himself a regular churchgoer, wants to keep things as they are, believing that monarchy, Church and state are the three pillars of our society; to which I would say that the Church is crumbling and the monarchy semi-crumbling. The Archbishop of Canterbury agrees on the grounds that disestablishment would send out a message that England is no longer a Christian country, which, in fact, it is not.

A former Archbishop of York, Dr John Habgood, has said that establishment does the Church little harm and the nation much good, which is also debatable, while the Bishop of St Albans sees establishment as a springboard for the spiritually minded; but couldn't a disestablished Church still be that?

Today, the disestablishmentarians are in the ascendant. Seven years ago, a poll of 100 clergy showed 58 per cent in favour of 58 per cent against. I guess that, if a similar poll were taken now, the margin would be much narrower; former anti would be content to accept loss of prestige in return for the freedom to run their own show.

The most outspoken of senior clergy in favour is Rt Rev Colin Buchanan, Bishop of Woolwich, who is clear that it cannot be right for a minority denomination to have a privileged position in the law and the constitution; that the leader of the majority party in the House of Commons should have power to appoint bishops; that MPs, who are not obliged to reveal their own religious beliefs, should have the final say in how the Church is run; that the 26 bishops, who sit in the Lords (and who may disappear when the Lords is reformed), are political appointees; and that every parishioner has the legal right to be married in church without having to declare whether he or she is a Christian or not.

This issue has become a running story because every day brings us nearer to the death of the Queen and the accession of the Prince of Wales. The question then will be whether, as an adulterer and a divorcee, he can, contrary to Church law, legitimately accept the titles bestowed on Henry VIII, his heirs and successors, as Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor. At present, the oath requires him to affirm that he will "maintain and pre-

serve" the Church's doctrines and forms of worship. This ignores other faiths, and a suggestion has been made that the oath could be amended to include them, in keeping with the Prince's wish to be defender or guardian of all faiths.

But there are other problems. Since the last coronation nearly 50 years ago, people's attitudes to the monarchy have changed. Then, the crowning of a young and attractive queen, together with the pomp and ritual of the occasion, was a thrilling event, which held the nation, and much of the world, spellbound. It will not be like that next time, when the recipient of the crown will be a middle-aged, balding, slightly tarnished figure; and, to my mind, there could be something faintly ridiculous in making him the centre of a full-blown coronation ceremony with all its attendant pageantry and pomp. Perhaps he thinks so too.

Another problem is Dr Carey saying that if the Prince were to marry Camilla that could cause a crisis in the Church. If he married the Church's laws would conflict with him carrying out the act of crowning, then there would be a crisis, because if he didn't do it, no other prelate could. All of which leads me to wonder whether we need a coronation ceremony at all. After all, Charles will have been king ever since the death of his mother several months before. What need is there for a formal confirmation of it?

**O**N the disestablishment issue, I'm all in favour. If we had a president rather than a monarch, it would be plainly absurd to require him, as part of his job, to adhere to a particular religion. I have always thought of religion as an entirely private matter, and to bind the head of state to a religion he may not personally favour, and in which few of its citizens any longer believe, seems to be a contradiction.

In bygone days the state religion was the factor that gave society cohesion and, if you dissented, you would probably end up at the stake. The social cohesion we enjoy today is based on something more mundane; sport, especially football, enjoyment of which can be shared at city, county, country and international level; and television, of which one can say the same.

In the long run, however, whether the Church is disestablished or not, is of little matter. With only two people in every 100 attending Sunday services, Christianity in this country is a dead religion. If you ask why, I would say that most people find the words of the Apostles' Creed, the cornerstone of Christian belief, no longer credible. If you've forgotten what they are, I think you will get a surprise.

Ludovic Kennedy is an author and broadcaster

## Weekend birthdays

**T**HE political staying power of the only Lebanese-American in the Clinton cabinet, Donna Shalala, 57 today, should be a surprise to all. It was in her area, as Health and Human Services Secretary, that the US president suffered his biggest defeat to date — on healthcare reform. Hillary took the blame for that disaster — which was just as well because, since the Monica Lewinsky scandal broke, it has been terribly useful having stolid Donna around as one of Clinton's staunchest supporters. A former president of the University of Wisconsin, she has won points for her skills as a departmental manager. Committedly unmarried, her greatest love seems to be her pet dog — framed photos of which adorn her Washington home.

**Today's other birthdays:** Prof Evelyn Ebsworth, chemist, vice-chancellor, Durham University, 66; Kevin Keegan, footballer, 47; Anita Klein, painter and printmaker, 86; Chris Lewis, cricketer, 50; Mannaia Maleeva, tennis player, 31; Michael Rudman, theatre director and producer, 58; Dr Sir Albert Sloman, educationalist, 77; Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman, English Heritage, 66; Marg-



ret Wright, chief commissioner, Guide Association, 56.

**Tomorrow's birthdays:** Clive Aslet, editor, *Country Life*, 43; Sir Harold Reesley, historian, 88; Claire Bloom, actress, 67; Frank Dunlop, theatre director, 71; Diana Jones, jockey, 48; Troy Kennedy Martin, screenwriter, 58; Clara Shalala, Clinton's secretary of State for International Development, 52.

## Death Notices

**FAWCETT,** John Stanford BSc, PhD (1944). Aged 69 on 2nd February. A lovely man who will be sadly missed. Husband of Frances and excellent father to seven. Memorial Service at St Paul's Church, Gorton at 11.00am Wed. Feb. 19th. Family flowers only please. Donated to St Paul's or Action for South Africa.

**HYDE,** Kenneth Edwin, educationalist and scholar unexpectedly in February on February 10th aged 55. For funeral details please telephone 01482 866222.

**TRAVIS,** peacefully at his home in the presence of his family, on Tuesday February 10th 1998, after a long illness, aged 72 years. Elderly loved husband of Brenda. Formerly a teacher, inventor by Arthur Aspin. A loving dad and granddad. Social and teacher. Guardian reader to the end.

**WARREN-DAVIS,** John, of Penryn, Cornwall and Exeter, died at his home, 10, Cheltenham, Devon, on 10th February. He was 74 years old. Burial at Crematorium, Exeter on 12th February, 11.00 am.

**Memorial Services**

**MORRIS,** Mervyn, Mozart's requiem. Sunday 15th March, 10.30am, St Augustine, Kilburn Park Rd, Maida Vale, London NW6.

## Engagements

**NOLAN-DAVIS,** Mike and Avril Nolan of Alfreton, Derby, are delighted to announce the engagement of their son Patrick to Pamela Davis, of London.

**WTO** place your announcement telephone 0171 735 4667 or fax 0171 735 4728 between 9am and 3pm Mon-Fri.

Cooper... he believed children should be treated seriously

## CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

**T**HE BOEING aircraft which crashed on to the M1 in January, 1989, was a 737 and not a 747 as stated in a report on Page 6, February 10.

**I**t is the policy of the *Guardian* to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Davis, by telephoning 0171 233 9339 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 233 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk



## To expel or press ahead

Peace needs a balance

MO MOWLAM will spend the weekend grappling with a dilemma, and not for the first time. To expel or not to expel, that is the question. The pressure to eject Sinn Féin from the peace process looked all but irresistible last night the RUC Chief Constable, Ronnie Flanagan, delivered his verdict that its armed allies — the IRA — were behind the murder of two men earlier in the week. The peace talks have a simple admissions policy — the Mitchell principles of non-violence. If any party or its paramilitary friends breaks those principles, it's out.

Last month the Ulster Democratic Party was shown the door, after its bedfellows in the Ulster Freedom Fighters saw in the new year with a spree of random killings of Catholics. Now the Government has to show it is even-handed. If the IRA has broken its own ceasefire, then Sinn Féin will have forfeited its place. To allow it to stay would inflame Unionist opinion, and David Trimble would find it harder than ever to persuade hardliners not to abandon the peace process.

Even so, Dr Mowlam's decision will not be easy. To banish Sinn Féin is to render the negotiations almost meaningless. These are peace talks convened to end a war, and for the army of one side to be missing all but voids the exercise. Gerry Adams is surely right to say that, without Sinn Féin, the talks "would not be worth a penny candle". Worse still, as he signalled on Thursday, the credibility of its peace strategy would diminish in the eyes of the IRA hardmen if the party were to be booted out. A calculated return to violence could follow.

So what should the British and Irish governments do? They could seek comfort in the distinction that can be drawn between this latest case and the UDP precedent. They could point out that while republicans have denied IRA involvement in the two murders, the UFF admitted its role in the January killings. But on matters of guilt or innocence, it is hardly sound to rely on the word of the accused — especially in the face of the kind of forensic evidence gathered by Mr Flanagan. To make admission of guilt the key criterion for expulsion would send the other paramilitaries a lethal signal: they can kill just so long as they don't tell the truth. Such a validation of "no claim, no blame" would amount to a Government invitation to more bloodshed.

Given the circumstances, Dr Mo should come down on the side of consistency. She should eject Sinn Féin as she did the UDP — temporarily and with a view to its imminent return. Once that's done, and with the scales duly balanced, all parties should resolve to make Sinn Féin's last expulsion from the talks. Despite Mitchell, the parties should recall that none of them is making peace with a troop of boy scouts. Rather than using the ongoing bursts of violence to throw people off the peace train — or to derail it altogether — they should also recall that it is the Northern Irish people's longing for violence which made them climb aboard in the first place. All the players should get the latest delay out of the way as soon as possible, and then press on to their hopeful deadline in May.

Lord, what a prayer!

And lead us not into banality

Mischief-makers may well have murmured "God's punishment" when the Bishop of Salisbury stumbled while introducing an "alternative" draft of the Lord's Prayer to the Anglican general synod. The Rt Rev David Stancliffe meant to declaim his group's lame post-modernist rewrite of "Lead us not into temptation". This is "Save us from the time of trial", a plea designed for recidivist house-breakers in the Essex badlands.

Instead Mr Stancliffe said, "Do not bring us to the time of trial", a sentence which — as any fan of recent repeats of the Blackadder comedy series will know — conveys real historical pain. It evokes real Witchfinder Generals and a procession of heretics and psychic women to torture and, ultimately, the stake. Often, when we try to say anything deeply comic or serious, we reach back instinctively to a long collective experience. The bishop's gaffe drew on this instinct as he proposed to wipe out its linguistic and emotional traces in a 450-year-old prayer still known (unlike any other church text) to 82 per cent of the British population — not just the one million church-goers.

Defensively, though wrenchingly, you can substitute "Forgive us our sins" for "Forgive us our trespasses". Trespass (which in Old French once had a force close to today's "out of order") is now perhaps unrescuably identified with bickering over fences. But much of the rest of the revision is dumbed-down banality. Henry VIII, who wrote part of the Lord's Prayer, knew more about temptation than David Stancliffe and his co-sacked co-neologisers.

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## Letters to the Editor

### Ku Klux Klan and cannabis

IT SEEMS that while Clare Short's offensive "golden elephant" comment about the people of Montserrat (Short's "sad lie", February 13) failed to register on the New Labour Richter scale, the suggestion that she may have compared the Ulster Unionists to the Ku Klux Klan constitutes a major earthquake (or, indeed, volcano).

The Ku Klux Klan is a racial supremacist organisation which believes in triumphalist marches through its self-defined enemies' communities and in keeping them second-class citizens in their own country. Clearly Short's supposed equation of the KKK and Unionists was entirely without foundation.

Mark Brown, Glasgow GL

THINK the UK taxpayers have had enough of this expensive nonsense, decades of talks about talks (Adams takes tough line on talks, February 13). Most of the institutions the loyalists have been loyal to (ie the monarchy) are fading fast and if Eire could guarantee the Northern Irish the same standard of living they have been used to, then they would not mind who is in control. After all we are not talking about an Argentinian military dictatorship here but a fully paid-up member of the EU. Let's do something positive for the millennium, let Eire take over the North — and give us all a break.

Martin Kingsley, Luton.

THE Home Secretary cannot claim (Lord David Straw over cannabis, February 11) to engage in serious debate about the prohibition of cannabis when his mind is already firmly made up on the subject. He is proselytising, not debating. And his position that this harmless drug is on a par with narcotics is about as dumbed-down as it's possible to get. Time for another chat with that boy of yours, Jack.

Tony Walton, Hove, East Sussex.

YOUR headline explains everything: "Bag to drop old guard in shadow reshuffle" (February 13). The Conservative Party is evidently led by the most disastrous general in British history.

Paul Tyler MP, LibDem Chief Whip, House of Commons.

YESTERDAY'S sports section contains 40 images of men (even the cartoon characters are male) but only one female and she is not presented as an active sporting personality.

Helen Kay, Edinburgh.

## Salvoes in the info-war

JONATHAN Freedland (Letters, February 11) misses a point in his explanation of why the young are "more gung-ho and ready to bomb Iraq than any other age group". We should remember that the 18 to 24-year-olds are the first generation more or less raised on saturation television. Programme and adverts create fear and conflict, and then resolve it neatly within 30 seconds or a few minutes. We are in the age of info-war.

Marc Henderson, Bristol.

CHRISTOPHER Fryer (Letters, February 11) is naive in his contrast between the US war against Vietnam in the 1960s and American military moves against Iraq. Those of us who opposed the Vietnam war had to see through a wall of propaganda about "evil communist aggression". The claims that Iraq is a threat to the security of the world are equally in need of questioning. It is America, Britain and Israel, not Iraq, that have H-bombs.

His premises about changes in public attitudes is also wrong. The proportion of people opposing war in the Gulf is about the same as that which opposed the war in

Vietnam — about one-third of the population.

Prof D A Turner, University of Kent.

WHAT Iraqis want is an agreement that if Iraq complies with specified conditions, there will be an end to the humiliation of arms inspections and the oil embargo.

Recently President Clinton said the inspections must continue as long as Iraq has the capability of restarting production. As every semi-industrialised country has the capability, that means forever. Iraq is being given no hope.

Alan Leadbetter, Stoke on Trent.

BOMBING Iraq will not topple Saddam Hussein. The good news is that the US is committing ground troops. Only when democratic forces (ideally UN, but in practice US and allies) enter Baghdad will Saddam be removed and sanctions and the suffering of the Iraqi people ended.

SA Rose, London.

ED Vulliamy (US law blocks weapons inspections, February 13) claims "it would be absurd to suggest any equivalence between Saddam Hussein's Iraq and the US". It would. Weapons in-

spections in Iraq are backed by the massive military presence in the Gulf. President Clinton has no such pressure to accept inspections.

Nick Frayn, Manchester.

AS A resident of Israel, I shudder to think we are likely to experience again the backlash from any military action in the Gulf.

What a lot of people do not know is that under Israel's last Labour government, Iraq had reportedly followed in the footsteps of Jordan and the PLO and made secret overtures regarding some form of non-aggression pact. Before the momentum could gather, the Clinton administration made its opinion known and those people involved in putting out feelers were given the order to back off.

Kills Pearman, Leeds.

THE majority of Arab states were persuaded to join the anti-Iraq coalition in 1991 by the promise of a New World Order in which the Palestinians would be liberated from occupation. With the Oslo peace process now ground to a halt, there is no Arab support for renewed attacks on Baghdad. Tony Blair's support of the Ameri-

can hard line can only discredit Britain's standing in this region.

Robin Yassin-Kassab, Jed Williams, Damascus, Syria.

THE Catholic Institute for International Relations deplores the present escalation towards military action against Iraq. Our development programmes in the region are still dealing with the damaging effects of the 1991 war. For its neutral stance at the time, Yemen, the poorest country in the Middle East, suffered severe economic deprivation. Up to one million migrant Yemeni workers in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf were expelled from their places of work and much Western aid was cut off.

If the bombing of Iraq goes ahead, the human cost and the infrastructural damage could be immense, and the standing of Britain and of UK-based development agencies will be greatly damaged.

Denis Hawes, CIPR, London.

SO Clinton's popularity is higher than Bush's after Desert Storm. Memo to politicians: make love not war.

Janet Pascoe, Uxbridge.

Lord Clinton-Davis, Minister, Dept of Trade and Industry.

MAHAMED Fadel Kamal of Polisario UK (Letters, February 12) calls upon Britain to ensure Morocco stands by agreements it has signed. We support UN efforts to bring about a free and fair referendum which will enable the people of the territory to decide between independence and integration within Morocco. I believe that the UN is closer now to finding a solution to the Western Sahara dispute than at any time since the establishment of MINURSO in 1991, largely thanks to the former US secretary of state James Baker, who, as Kofi Annan's personal envoy, brought Morocco and Polisario together for talks last year.

I can assure Morocco, and the Polisario, that we want a free, transparent and just referendum, and will do all we can to help bring that about.

Derek Fitchett, Minister, Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONTRARY to your report, the Government has not decided to halt the planting of genetically modified herbicide tolerant crops (Report, February 10). We shall be announcing our decision shortly.

Jeff Rooker MP, Minister, Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

THE real issue is how to repair the system of international security

Give peace-keeping a chance

Martin Woolacott

Commentary

IN the peace camp in other situations. Equally, among those doubting the utility of force are those, including professional soldiers, who would normally be in favour. Realists that should make for less heated exchanges, but it does not seem so. One side concentrates on the horror that is Saddam, the other on the cruelties of sanctions and on the additional cruelties that an attack will bring, and on its alleged lack of utility.

One British academic is said to have described the choice between supporting and not supporting the American coalition in the Gulf war as a choice between imperialism and fascism. Between an American hegemony which has been the benign in the past, and could certainly not be guaranteed to be benign in the future, and a truly vicious local tyrant who had crossed frontiers, he reluctantly preferred the former. Others who had the same opinion at that time have shifted, in the present case, to the view that while Saddam is as bad as he ever was, the use of American force this time is worse, whether it be a brief burst of missiles and bombs or the more sustained application of military power that might lead to his removal.

But it is odd that previous punitive bombardments of Iraq produced nothing like the state of anxiety or the range of opposition evident today. The reason, perhaps, is that what is at issue now, and what was being discussed yesterday in the Security Council in New York, is less whether there should be an attack on

Iraq than how to repair a system of international security which since 1991 has fallen into disarray. That system depended on a readiness among a majority of nations to accept, at least for a while, the leadership of a single super-power, on the understanding, or maybe just the hope, that it would broker conflicts, bring about improvements, and take a responsible role in managing world affairs. The problem is that the US has delivered less than it could or should have to most areas, and that even its closer supporters, let alone those whose agreement was very partial, have become impatient or even alienated.

What Washington is dealing with is a kind of revolt. The question is whether America is a leader trying to impose a dangerous plan on properly concerned followers, or whether a feeble and short-sighted group of nations are sabotaging American leadership. It might even be said that the threat of American bombing is directed more at these rebels than it is at Iraq.

It is in these circumstances that Saddam Hussein's increasingly open defiance of the US put American leadership on the line. The critics are probably right to say that if Saddam is allowed to get away with his defiance, and the inspection regime and the sanctions are decisively softened, he would not instantly start waving his weapons of mass destruction about. Perhaps he never would, given that he is bordered all around by powerful enemies, some of whom also have these weapons.

But a victorious Saddam would represent a blow to American prestige and to American capacity to control events in the Middle East. The important issue is whether that loss of control would lead on so soon or later to an anarchic situation with a potential for major regional war, with mass destruction weapons in play. Do we think — and does the Middle East think — that it is as a region at this moment capable of peacefully settling its own affairs? Hope and aspiration aside, it seems that in the Middle East, as in other parts of the world, American

are menacing features. Such factors make a regional settlement even more pressing.

The UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, who has lived most of his life in the United States, knows better than most that American power must stand at the centre of his calculations. Deployed in the right way it can further the objectives of peace and of the UN. Applied or withheld in an irresponsible or selfish way, it can undermine them.

The Secretary General is also under pressure from the other members of the Security Council and from many Muslim countries who are against an attack in almost any circumstances, or at least feel that they have to be on the record as against. He has a hard course to steer, and the diplomatic baton, it seems, may soon be passed to him, as it was passed in January 1991 to Perez de Cuellar.

Nothing which the special envoy has so far produced, with the possible exception of the French plan for adding diplomats and experts for visits to the presidential sites but with no time limits or other restrictions, seems likely to meet American requirements.

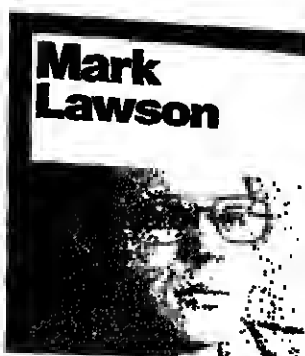
If he goes to Baghdad without a serious proposal that, if not determined too much by the Iraqis, has a chance in Washington, then he will be going just to show he kept trying until the last minute



# Saturday opinion

## Never say Di

Mark Lawson



THE BRITISH newspapers this week represented perhaps the worst example ever seen of the psychological condition of denial. In life, Diana, Princess of Wales, was an enthusiastic advocate of the benefits of therapy. So it is that she seems to have left behind her a nation in urgent need of a 12-step programme on bereavement. Culture-watchers had marked down the next bout of Diana-madness for the first anniversary at the end of August. Yet, without any provocation from the calendar, newspapers have frenziedly revisited her life and death this week. The Times excitedly serialised a book by two American journalists about her last days, while the Daily Mirror ran a two-day interview with Mohammed Al Fayed, promoting his own theories about the tragic weekend in Paris. Some of this activity is simply imitative — the Daily Mail had just profited hugely from a sentimental part-work on Diana — but this latest evidence of the princess's apparent public immortality raises important questions about the national media and psyche. Given regrettable credibility by a newspaper still associated by many with seriousness, the American book — *Death Of A Princess: An Investigation* by Thomas Sananton and Scott MacLeod — seems, from the extracts the Times selected, to be less an investigation than a combination of paraphrased magazine articles from last September, Parisian chit-chat and reckless guesses.

The writers' widely-publicised claim that the princess might have lived if

the writers offer no second source for this story. Seeking credibility solely through insistent repetition, Al Fayed told the nurse story again in his Mirror interview, adding the claim that his son had become engaged to the princess and his belief that the couple were murdered to prevent cultural embarrassment to the Royal Family.

He is far less culpable than Sananton and MacLeod in that his motive for spreading doctored theories is not money but deep despair. His paranoia is easy to understand. In his mind, there is a pattern of shadowy establishment forces seeking to deny him those British things he wanted: Harrods, a UK passport and, finally and most brutally, a royal daughter-in-law. We can see why he believes what he believes. But his Mirror misdeed — and the Sananton/MacLeod book to which he contributed — touches importantly on the question of why so many others believe alternative versions of the Diana car-crash.

THE MODERN popularity of conspiracy theories has been attributed to the approaching millennium or the decline of belief in God. But another significant cause of late 20th century credulity has been the collapse in editorial authority.

Increased commercial competition has brought pressure for rapid printing or transmission and the resultant spreading of information — half-fact, no fact, innuendo, gossip — which has nothing to commend it as journalism other than the fact that no other news outlet has got it. As demonstrated most spectacularly in the White House sex scandal, if one media source tries to delay a story for old-fashioned verification, it will soon emerge from a rival one or through the Internet.

The current Diana books and articles are products of the same low-fact culture. But the princess's media afterlife also suggests psychosis and specifically those disturbing stories about the bereaved who continue to behave as if their loved one were still present, jaywalking two places for breakfast,

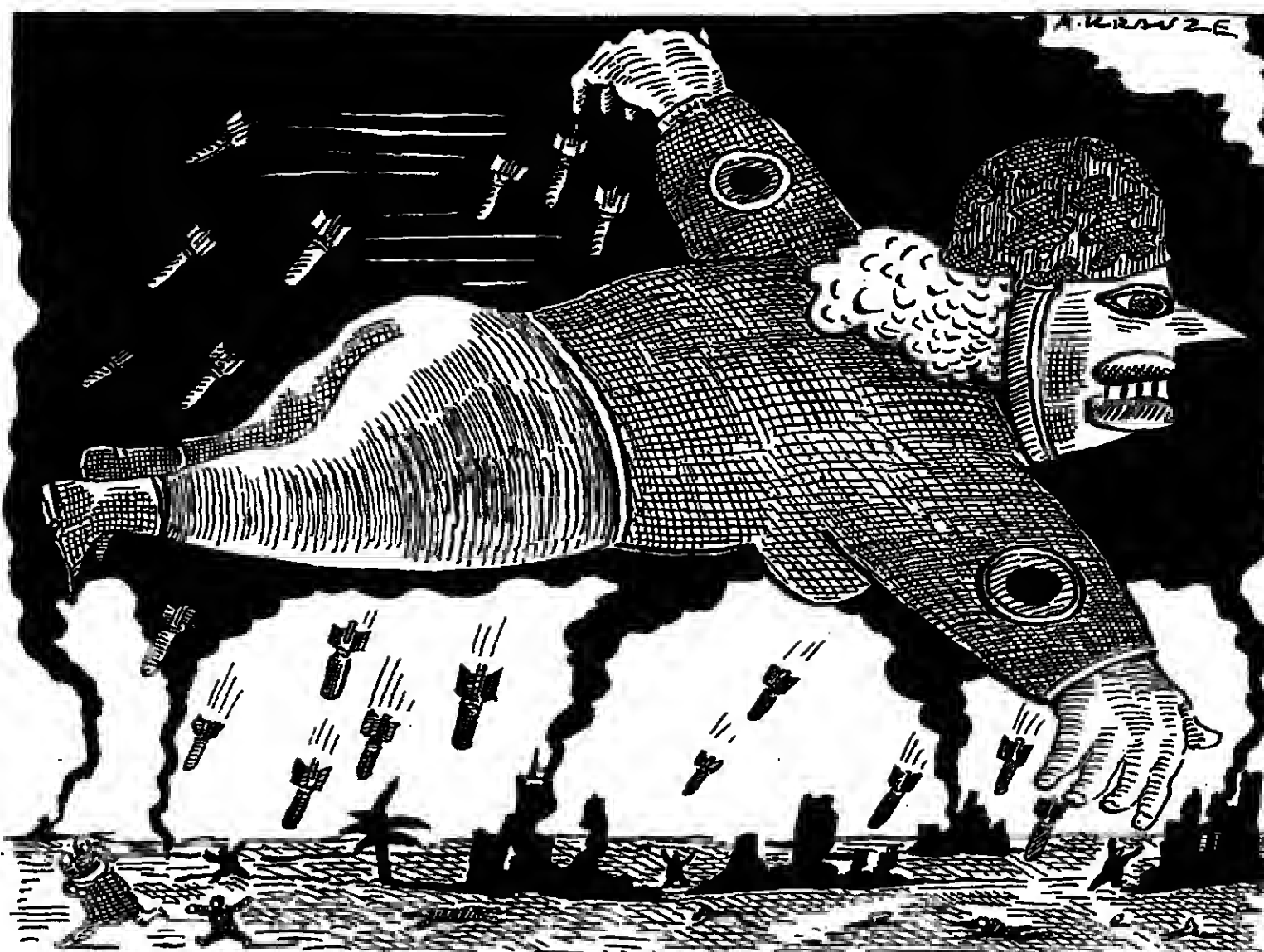
## Keeping the corpse propped up in bed

transferred more quickly to hospital — based on comments from an American specialist with no direct knowledge of the princess's injuries — is typical of the approach. Investigative journalism — a genre which depends on the weight of its allegations — is blatantly made a matter of opinion rather than fact to produce pages which manage to be entirely useless to the general reader yet horrifically upsetting to family or friends of the dead woman.

The dynamics of the world of medicine are such that a contrary opinion is always readily available. Most doctors are convinced that their colleagues are idiots. This character trait is relatively harmless within the profession — except when harnessed by lawyers to complicate court cases — but, in the hands of Sananton and MacLeod, serves to debauch journalism and inflame private grief.

IDEALLY, investigative books should establish definitive facts in a narrative which might have become mangled by newspaper haste. What Sananton and MacLeod more often do is to set down rival speculations on which they are unable to cast further light. The reader goes into the book knowing that Mohammed Al Fayed claimed to have been told Diana's final words by a hospital nurse but that others dismiss this claim. The book presents the case counter between Al Fayed and the nurse as unchallenged fact, the prose talking on that cocky novelistic voice characteristic of the genre: "Al Fayed was approached by an official he knew." Yet

## Gun girls



## Gun girls

Catherine Bennett



WHY WOULD anyone want to start a war, asks Steven Pinker. And why, he persists, in *How The Mind Works*, do people "volunteer for an activity that has an excellent chance of getting them killed"? Where men are concerned, he

offers a persuasive explanation for the apparent insanity. Men fight, he suggests, in his confident way, from an evolutionarily adaptive impulse to get their hands on more women. If they fight in a group, the odds of impregnating women exceed those of personal extinction. Reproductive success may not be a conscious goal, but it goes some way to explaining why, from the Trojan wars to the ones in Bosnia and Rwanda, undisciplined soldiers have always added rape to carnage.

When it comes to women and war, however, the evolutionary argument fits less neatly with current behaviour. War, Pinker argues, does not offer a woman enhanced reproductive success, and this explains the reluctance to send women into combat: "It is hard to shake

the intuition that war is a game that benefits men (which was true for most of our evolutionary history), so they should bear the risks." In reality, a woman's right to kill and be killed is being eagerly claimed. Any reservations about women soldiers are invariably attributed to the blimpish chivalry or English chivalry of threatened, military fuddy-duddies. The Defence Secretary, George Robertson, says that if the army wishes to be seen as "modern and enlightened" it must reconsider its position on women in combat.

Not long ago, when women were still sticking nappies to the fence at Greenham, enlightened feminist feelings about war were usually an approximation of Virginia Woolf's, developed in her 1938 polemic, *Three Guineas*. As

outsiders, she wrote, women should refuse to fight with arms, and remind any man who attempts to arouse their patriotism, "that you are fighting to gratify a sex instinct which I cannot share..."

Nowadays, if they mention militarism at all, our new feminists are less likely to deplore male war-mongering than to complain that "only" 47 per cent of jobs in the army are open to them. To aspiring combatants, the lack of public protest when 11 American women were killed and two captured in the Gulf war, is considered a hopeful sign. "The idea of a 'weaker sex', requiring male protection, had lost its grip," says Barbara Ehrenreich in her book, *Blood Rites*. Today, the presence of almost 150 Navy and Airforce women in the Gulf,

## It seems to be no more than a piece of feminist zealotry

where they might soon get the opportunity to bomb Iraqi women and children, is also presented as an achievement. Kate Mair, the author of *Arms And The Woman*, recently reported that the women on HMS Nottingham and HMS Coventry are on 24-hour alert — "if it comes to

action stations, they will be loading explosives into the ship's magazines and firing. For British women, this may be the first taste of combat."

We must assume, for the sake of these women and their colleagues, that relations on HMS Coventry have improved since the days when "Officer Underpants" entertained the ladies. As a series of costly compensation claims has shown, integration in the British armed forces seems to have achieved little more, so far, than organised sexual harassment. In the US the whole experiment is now considered — by the Defence Department at least — to have been a disaster for discipline, standards and morale.

IN THIS country, however, George Robertson intends to persevere with integration, by making 70 per cent of army jobs open to women. "The armed forces must represent the society they defend if they are not to become isolated from it," he says. Will self-esteem and physical restraint become more highly prized than obedience and main force? How far can the army civilise itself before it ceases to function as an army? Long before women joined up, the soldiery was renowned for its bullying, initiation rites and drunken enormities. Repulsive and brutal, of course — but isn't that the point of a soldiery? "It's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' Tommy go away." But it's "thank you, Mister Atkins," when the band begins to play.

Perhaps even today, one can hardly view the view that women are generally less violent than men, and that this is still a quality to be welcomed, rather than not. Little girls are seldom cajoled into playing, against their inclination, with guns. Even as adults, it's unclear how many women truly aspire to the front line. A Harvard study of 900 women recently found that 70 per cent thought women should be allowed to go into combat — but that only 11 per cent of enlisted women wanted those jobs.

So why do anyone agitate for the chance to shoot and be shot at? Like the right to box — currently being demanded at an industrial tribunal — it seems to be no more than a piece of feminist zealotry — which forgets that some equal rights might be better left unclaimed. If I were a man, I might want to insist that women do all our fighting now, to make up for being such laggards for so many millennia.

Admittedly, female non-participation in combat means leaving the ultimate responsibility for defence with men, and accepting that only men can adequately carry out certain jobs. But would we want to claim for women equal representation among murderers, too?

## Travel sick

Matthew Engel



LET'S take a break from trivia like World War III for a moment and consider an issue that obsesses a fair proportion of the population. The world, as we know, divides into two classes of people: those who travel regularly, especially on business, and those who don't.

The non-travellers assume that anywhere else is automatically desirable. It doesn't matter where the traveller might be going: Novosibirsk in January, Alabama in August, Sniper Alley, Baghdad — it simply has to be preferable to Stevenage. "Oooh, lucky you. Can I come?"

The traveller, however, addicted to movement he may be, however gentle his mission, feels that no one back home understands his suffering: the cloned hotel rooms, the forlorn nights, the planes...

frutting, wheedling, pleading and plotting to get upgrades. John Major wanted a classless society. The airlines have gone in the opposite direction, creating a society of rigid and hard-bitten stratification. On most long-distance planes now there are three classes of travel.

1) Quite Ludicrously Sybaritic. What you might call a Lord Sebastian Flight. I once got upgraded to first-class on a Cathay Pacific plane to Hong Kong. The stewardess seemed extremely hurt and upset when I declined, politely but firmly, her insistent offers of oral sex. (Memory may have embellished the details but not the general tenor of our relationship.)

2) Fairly Over-The-Top. Business class travel is an outrageous rip-off. Anyone who pays four or five times the cheapest fare just to get their jacket hung up, and free champagne and grapes after the meal, is a pretty sad case. Its attraction comes when you consider the alternative.

3) Cattle Class, or Cheap and Cheerless. Most readers will be familiar with the concept.

find any long flight in Cattle Class pretty tough. For older bodies, longer legs and fuller figures, they must be utter torment.

It is possible to travel from Heathrow to New Zealand in a middle seat of the middle section at the tail-end of a jumbo with two fat people either side, behind someone who leans his seat back the whole way. It is possible to know something of the life of the crated calf and the battery hen. And every year it gets more unpleasant.

Competition between airlines on the pleasures of economy class passengers is now negligible. A Question Of Class (published by Hoeg Robinson Business Travel, £4.50).

## I declined politely her offers of oral sex

a guide to 31 different airlines flying out of the UK, emphasises how little there is between the companies. Air New Zealand offers footrests; Varig, SAS and Emirates seem to have wider seats; Air France has a smokers' bar; Qantas gives you fruit juice before take-off; Virgin hands round choc ices. That's about it. Otherwise, only the accent of the crew tells you who you're with.

Individual videos are coming in, which is an improvement. But generally one air-conditioned crate is much like any other. Because world airlines operate most of the year, until knees now have nowhere to go except the small of someone else's back.

I happen to be small and a couple of workouts away from being the right weight, and I

travellers who can get away with it will pay anything to avoid the hell of Cattle Class; and they do. They know most Cattle travellers will put up with anything just to be allowed to get on the planes cheap. And that complainants can safely be regarded as loonies.

The one airline which has addressed this problem is Virgin, whose premium economy service — for people who actually pay the proper economy fare — is pretty decent in my experience. Your food gets hurried at you without a smile as in Cattle; but it is possible to breathe.

The most alarming rumour is that the railway companies want to emulate the airlines' methods. At present, there is only a 50 per cent differential between the two classes at rush-hour prices on British trains. The standard class seats are not too hellish.

AND THERE is a great deal to be said for not travelling First, because pretty near everyone there draws their status from using their mobile phones and hawling their wheabouts. (There are encouraging reports that they will all die horrible deaths as a result of this, but not, alas, before they get to Paddington.)

If the trains imitate the planes, we will have Quite Ludicrously Sybaritic Class on the one hand and, as sure as anything, Cattle Class on the other.

And the one development that the airlines do seem to be on to is the gradual introduction of the in-flight phone. Is there to be no escape? Either travellers are going to have to start rebelling, and demanding the chance to fly in only moderate discomfort at moderate prices, or there is going to be a lot to be said for spending the 21st century at home.

Looking good in bare essentials

Celebrate with me tonight. I'm a brunette my body is smooth, and best enjoyed in a see-through number.

Reply Box 149

FOUNDERS FLAVOUR WORTH FINDING







Polly in whose pocket?



Polly Pocket, pictured with Tamara Beckwith at a product launch, needs all the friends she can get. Her makers, Bluebird Toys, received a \$42 million bid last night from Guinness Peat Group, run by Sir Ron Brierley, the New Zealand corporate raider who has a 22 per cent stake. He condemned the group's "deteriorating" trading position. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID GILES

# Accountants abandon pact

Lisa Buckingham  
City Editor

**P**LANS to create the world's biggest accountancy firm collapsed yesterday amid accusations that regulatory scrutiny had turned into a "nightmare".

Ernst & Young and KPMG unveiled their merger plan last November, two months after Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand announced plans to merge. The fifth- and sixth-largest accountancy firms announced plans to unite and leapfrog the market leader, Andersen Worldwide, which earns about \$9.5 billion a year.

The PW/C&L combine, which expects total revenue of \$11.8 billion a year, has long said that Ernst & Young and KPMG decided to get together as a spoiling tactic, in the hope that regulators would reject both deals. "We are not surprised they called it off," said one PW insider. "This was always a copycat merger, a spoiler which was hastily put together but had no strategic legs."

A spokesman for PW said the firm did not share KPMG's antipathy to regulatory questioning. "The regulator is entitled to ask whatever questions he wants. This now lays the field open for our deal."

There are tensions also within Andersen which could see a split between its accountancy and consultancy divisions. Recent research suggests that two-thirds of executives in the world's biggest corporations have doubts about the strength of competition in the sector. Hostility was strongest among corporations in Britain and France, but muted in the US.

The European Commission has begun inquiries into both merger plans and Karel Van Miert, the competition commissioner, drove to the heart of the mergers by demanding secret information on auditing fees charged by the big groups, in order to ascertain how significantly they were "loss leading" on price. But he was not the only rigorous scrutineer. Ernst and KPMG also faced scrutiny in the US, Australia, Switzerland, Canada and Japan which they said would have taken many months.

## Lloyds hints at £25bn spoiler against rival

Lisa Buckingham

**L**LOYDS TSB yesterday gave the clearest hint yet that it is ready to pounce on rival National Westminster Bank with a bid which would probably cost more than £25 billion.

Although chairman Sir Brian Pitman said only that Lloyds was ready to spoil any merger between Barclays and NatWest, insiders made it clear that the bank had gone much further in sizing up its potential target.

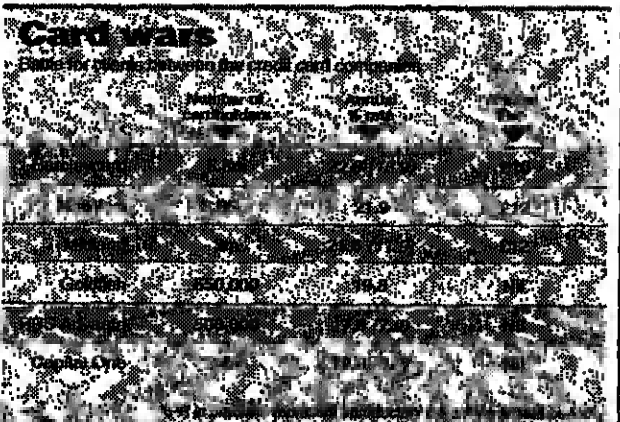
## Barclaycard forced to cut rates

Charges remain higher than those of many of its newer competitors

Rupert Jones

**I**NTERSE competition in the UK's £35 billion credit card market has prompted Barclaycard, the biggest player by far, to reduce interest rates and fees for millions of customers.

New cardholders are being offered a lower introductory interest rate, while more than a million high-spending cardholders will get a full rebate on their £10 annual fee.



At the same time, cardholders who spend £3,000 in a year (£3,000 for gold card holders) will receive a refund on their annual fee. Around 1.3 million people already fall into this category.

From Monday, 3.5 million customers will benefit from either a fee rebate or an interest rate reduction. The move is part of a wider strategy to attract new customers and to compete with low interest rates.

A senior executive said the bank thought the Government would agree a merger so long as the combine sold a substantial element of its small to medium-sized business portfolio. Lloyds, which is valued at more than £47 billion on the market, admitted it had looked into reducing its small-business exposure when it tried to acquire Midland Bank a few years ago and this would not pose many problems now.

NatWest arguably has the strongest small-business franchise of the leading banks and has been strengthening its retail offering. But it has been

## Treasury 'exploited' security staff

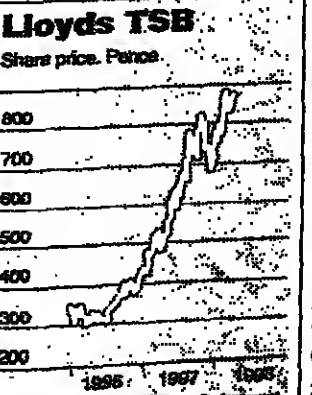
David Goss  
Industrial Editor

**T**HE Treasury stood accused by a leading trade union last night of exploiting a loophole in European law to sack 42 security guards and imposing cuts in their pay and conditions by transferring their jobs to a private sector firm, Group 4.

In what is likely to be an important test case that has already prompted the cabinet office to consult its solicitors, the Transport and General Workers Union is threatening legal action against the Treasury for knowingly breaching British and European law.

Within the last week the Treasury, according to TGWU officials, chose to award a three-year contract for security services to Group 4, the only one of three short-listed firms to refuse to recognise 1981 regulations known as the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) or TUPE.

The union won a 1993 case in the European Court of Justice that TUPE rules applied to Eastbourne distillery when it was sold to a private company, hence to 5.8 million public servants. But Ayse Suzen, last year's European Court of Justice case, has cast doubt on the validity of TUPE and EU law and caused confusion among employers by suggesting they do not apply to contracted-out services.



## Move against mobiles

Simon Beavis  
Media Business Editor

**T**HE telecoms regulator went to war with the mobile telephone industry yesterday when he issued his first order against a cellular phone company.

Don Cruickshank, the director-general of Ofcom, issued a provisional order against Cellnet, 60 per cent owned by BT,

for allegedly stifling competition in the sale of airtime on its network by offering more favourable terms to big sales agents, with which it often has commercial ties, than it does to small companies.

The conflict comes at a time of growing public anger about the cost of mobile phones, particularly the cost of calling into a mobile network. The European Commission began an investigation this week.

## Fraud suspect alters plea

Geoffrey Gibbs

**A**FRAUD trial that had been expected to last up to six months took a dramatic turn yesterday when one defendant changed his plea.

A man accused with two others of swindling investors out of £6 million by setting up a series of bogus banks in an English seaside resort pleaded guilty on charges of deception and conspiracy to defraud.

The development came at the end of a six-day opening of the prosecution case. A jury at Bristol Crown Court had been told that a former TSB building in

### Saturday Notebook

## Showing benefit of Latin lessons



Edited by  
Alex Brummer

**T**HE transformation of Lloyds TSB from also-ran to leader among Britain's big four banks in terms of profits and market capitalisation is well documented. The Lloyds experiment in becoming Britain's first all-singing, all-dancing consumer bank, while rivals like Barclays and NatWest concentrated on investment banking, has worked admirably for Lloyds chairman Sir Brian Pitman and the shareholders. The proof is in the 1997 figures, with profits climbing 26 per cent before tax to £3.2 billion.

opportunities for expanding its franchise are in Europe, and by acquiring market share in its key mortgage and insurance markets in the UK. The low-cost way of expanding into Europe is not the SBC-UBS type of mega-deal but making the best use of the new technologies. The bank has demonstrated that it can exploit this opportunity in the UK, where it has gained 800,000 customers through PhoneExpress Bank and plans to do likewise on the Continent. The important issue on the home front is to continue driving down costs, so as to be able to compete with the new retailer banks (Sainsbury, Tesco) and to use its balance-sheet resources to buy technology. There are plenty of tasty mutual insurance and building society morsels out there. But the real feast would be a run at NatWest, and it has the resources and know-how to carry it off.

### Due credit

**O**NE of the great scandals of personal finance in Britain lies in the rates of interest charged by credit card companies. Base rates may be a relatively modest 7.25 per cent and mortgage rates just above that but the charges made by leading credit card providers Barclaycard are nearly triple this and have remained stubbornly high throughout the economic cycle. There are some good reasons for this. Credit card defaults and fraud are notoriously prevalent and the provider needs to cover these costs as well as all the little extras on which they pride themselves (see *Jobs & Money*, page 4).

But the reality is that the globalisation of financial markets together with IT changes are altering credit card economics in favour of the consumer. The arrival of the American battalions on these shores, most notably Capital One, have spurred competition on its head. Despite its protests to the contrary, Barclaycard has had to respond by providing big discounts to heavy users by lowering the APR by two points. But it is not just US banks, with their emphasis on direct-mail selling, which are making an impact. Goldfish, part of British Gas, is maximising its access to many of Britain's homes with relish and has gained 700,000 customers. Other fleet-of-foot players like the Co-op Bank and RBS Advanta are playing a strong game. Open capital markets have taken a few knocks as a result of the Asian fall-out. But, if that means cheaper credit in the UK, the consumer will not be complaining.

### Blues lesson

**I**F ONE were looking for the best examples of corporate governance in Britain, Chelsea Village, a smallish second-line company on the Alternative Investment Market, would not necessarily be the first port of call. Nevertheless, the sacking of Ruud Gullit and the size of his contract demands offer a salutary lesson for over-ambitious chief executives elsewhere in Britain. If the demands for ever-larger contracts and better incentive schemes continue, more boardrooms may invoke the ultimate sanction: dismissal. That is why 12-month, rather than two or three-year, service agreements are so crucial.

### News in brief

#### Eddie to stay with Old Lady

The Government is set to end weeks of speculation over Bank of England governor Eddie George's future by offering him a further five-year term next week.

Mr George's current term ends in June, and the delay in announcing his re-appointment had led to rumours that the Government was considering other candidates.

But the lack of a credible alternative and Mr George's strong support within the City appear to have swung the decision in his favour.

#### £2.5bn Airbus deal

Airbus, stepping up its battle with Boeing to dominate the world's airspace, said yesterday it expects to conclude soon a \$4 billion (£2.5 billion) deal to supply 1000 A320 planes to airlines from Chile, Brazil and El Salvador. Boeing, which normally supplies 90 per cent of the Latin American market, saw its 787 described by Airbus as "warmed-over toast".

#### GEC fills war chest

GEC yesterday completed the \$300 million-plus disposal programme initiated last July by

new managing director Lord Simpson, with the £225 million sale of chip-making Plessey Semiconductors to Canada's Mitec Corp. It is seen by analysts as paving the way for GEC, which already has £1.1 billion in cash and expects to raise \$1 billion more through the partial float of GEC Alsthom, to make an acquisition in Europe or the United States later this spring.

#### Arculus's new job

David Arculus, the man who threw United News and Media into fresh turmoil on Thursday by resigning as chief operating officer, is to become chairman of magazine publisher IPC and part-time chairman of the water company, Severn Trent.

But it is apparent that United's Lord Hollick could keep Mr Arculus to his contract, which does not officially expire until April 1999, in a scenario that mirrors the ongoing row with Stephen Grabiner, who is trying to leave United to become head of digital broadcaster EDS.

IPC was bought out in January for \$200 million by its management. Mr Arculus had wanted to buy IPC for United, but was thwarted by Lord Hollick.

TOURIST RATES - BANK SELLS

Australia 2.37	France 9.67	Italy 2.877	Singapore 2.86
Austria 20.34	Germany 2.8995	Malta 0.53	South Africa 7.87
Belgium 59.59	Greece 429.39	Netherlands 3.2453	Spain 243.74
Canada 2.30	Hong Kong 12.33	New Zealand 2.74	Sweden 12.58
Cyprus 0.85	India 83.81	Norway 12.05	Switzerland 2.19
Denmark 11.06	Ireland 1.1574	Portugal 205.18	Turkey 352.290
Finland 5.80	Israel 5.80	Saudi Arabia 6.04	USA 1.0028

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and local shekel).



The international ice cream war, page 10  
Interest rate cut on the cards, page 11

# FinanceGuardian

With Northern Ireland's peace talks on the brink of collapse following the two murders linked by police to the IRA, it is business as

usual for battle-hardened factories and offices in the Six Counties.

But a lasting peace could make the difference

between 'getting by' and thriving in the sort of benevolent atmosphere that developed at the start of the peace process.

Loft apartments may be thin on the ground but, MARK ATKINSON finds, people are making a better living in Belfast



## Green shoots belie the terror

IT IS hard to imagine less fertile soil in which to plant a business — a narrow strip of blighted land in one of Britain's most deprived inner-city areas, with all the associated problems of poor health, low educational attainment and high long-term unemployment.

On yes, and then there are the bullets and the bombs which, though less frequent these days, have not stopped. For this particular pocket of urban decay is not in any city, it is in Belfast — and not just anywhere in Belfast: in West Belfast, sandwiched between the staunchly loyalist Shankill Road and fiercely nationalist Falls Road, which run parallel with each other.

There, in the shadow of the so-called peace line, the 24-foot high, graffiti-scarred wall dividing the two communities, sits the Twin Spires business centre, managed by Orus (Latin for birth), the West Belfast enterprise agency. Twin Spires is home of, among other businesses, Silo Tank, a manufacturer of chemical storage tanks.

The family-run company, started in 1993 with six people, is Twin Spires' longest-standing tenant and now has 38 employees and a turnover of £1.4 million.

Hardly ICI, but it stands as living testimony to the fact that it is possible to survive, and even thrive, commercially in the worst of economic, social and political circumstances.

That is not to say the troubles don't impinge on Silo Tank's business. In the past, production has been disrupted by Catholics and Protestants throwing petrol bombs at each other, says Seamus Carmichael, sales and marketing director, and

the boss's son. And on Wednesday, with tension rising after two murders in the previous 24 hours, the security gates which span the roads linking the Shankill and Falls Roads were closed as a safeguard against escalating violence.

It meant a lengthy diversion for the firm's loyalist employees, who had 20 minutes added to their journey to work.

"We lose production time as a result," says Mr Carmichael. Nevertheless, in spite of such relatively minor but irritating inconveniences, business goes on. And not just on Belfast's front line. Down in the heart of the city centre, amid bustling shopping streets and bulging restaurants, Information Management Resources, a Florida-based computer services company, which set up shop in the December on Adelaide Street, is busy developing a new personnel system for a major UK retailer.

Undeterred by the absence of a lasting peace, the company is taking advantage of the availability of the province's relatively low-cost, highly-educated computer science graduates from the city's two universities. "It was a courageous decision to come here," says the Northern Ireland president of the company, Bro McFerran.

On the outskirts of the north-eastern port of Larne, one of four divisions of home-grown Galen Holdings, a pharmaceutical company, es-

tablished in 1968 and now employing 673 people.

It is one of Northern Ireland's most successful companies, and on Tuesday it announced a £5.5 million investment that will create 70 new jobs producing bags for intravenous sterile solutions.

All three firms are prime examples of Northern Ireland's untold economic success story. It may come as a surprise to mainlanders poisoned by nightly news reports to learn that throughout the 1990s the province has been one of the fastest growing regional economies. Over the past five years, manufacturing output has increased by almost 22 per cent — twice the rate of growth nationally. In the same period, employment has grown by 6.9 per cent, compared with 1.7 per cent nationally.

Unemployment — currently

in 1996 was just 23,700 — the lowest in the UK, according to the Office for National Statistics. Compared with its similarly-resourced neighbour in the south — the so-called Celtic Tiger — Northern Ireland is still a pussy cat. The challenge is how to make it roar.

The official view from the Industrial Development Board (IDB) is that political instability and violence make little difference to Northern Ireland's economic prosperity.

Chief executive Bruce Robinson points out that the province's recently-improved performance predates the two ceasefires. "So there's no real connection," he says, although he adds that political stability "would help".

Indeed, there seems to be general agreement that there are more urgent problems to overcome.

Asked to list the top half dozen concerns of business at the moment, Dr Graham Gudgeon, director of the Northern Ireland Economic Research Centre, says the first three are "the pound, the pound and the pound", the strength of which is making life extremely difficult for exporters.

In fourth place he places the damage inflicted to farmers by the BSE scare. "Food is 20 per cent of total production and quite a lot of that is beef," says Dr Gudgeon.

In fifth place, Dr Gudgeon puts the euro. It's a racing certainty that the Republic will be one of the countries to

join economic and monetary union in the first wave in 1999 and, with Northern Ireland staying outside, local firms could be at a severe price disadvantage if the punt enters the euro-zone at its current 15 to 20 per cent discount against sterling.

With the punt linked to the euro-bloc currencies rather than sterling, increased currency volatility could disrupt north-south trade, affect shopping along the border and reinforce the divide between the two parts of the island at a time when strenuous efforts are being made by some businessmen to forge closer economic links.

"All of these things are more important (to the Northern Ireland economy) than the troubles," says Dr Gudgeon.

But that is not to say that the troubles are irrelevant. From a broader, long-term perspective, permanent peace may even hold the key to Northern Ireland becoming a serious player in the global economy, says Sir George Quigley, chairman of Ulster Bank and elder statesman of the business community.

"If things go on as they are we will get on well enough. We will knock down and businesses that are doing well will continue to do well," he says.

"But since when was doing well ever good enough? We have to get some ambition in this society." Peace, says Sir George, could take Northern Ireland on to a different trajectory.

Apart from giving an immediate boost to the tourist trade, which has the potential to create up to 20,000 jobs, according to Roy Baille, chairman of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, a stable political and security climate could

generate significant extra inward investment, on the sort of scale which has transformed the south.

Once firms can be persuaded to visit Northern Ireland, most are pleasantly surprised by its relative normality. But getting them there in the first place can prove a problem, given the negative publicity the province gets.

Sir George says peace would help unite the warring communities behind a common purpose of raising living standards, concentrating on becoming fully integrated Europeans and making easier the task of rebalancing the economy away from the public sector towards the private sector.

That may well be the objective behind Northern Ireland

Economy Minister Adam Ingram's recently-announced review of economic development strategy. But, without peace, it is hard to see how it can be achieved.

Partly because of the security situation, more than a third of all Northern Ireland employees, 193,000 people, are in the public sector and many other jobs rely on public-sector employment.

There is also, it seems, a deeply ingrained private business culture which expects public subsidy almost as a matter of course. Galeo's investment included £1.5 million from the IDB. Yet, in its annual report, the firm boasts of a 58 per cent increase in profits last year.

As the size of the state sector contracts, few doubt that Northern Ireland will come

under pressure to wean itself off the drip-feed of taxpayers' money, a process which, handled sensitively, could facilitate change and help nurture a more vigorous entrepreneurial spirit.

But it will take time — 10 to 15 years in Sir George's opinion — to achieve the necessary transformation and it could prove impossible if peace is not maintained.

After all, which politician, even one with a massive majority, would have the courage to slash public spending on the scale that may be needed without first having in place a lasting peace?

If Ulster descended into a new spiral of civil war, he or she would almost certainly get the blame for making an already intolerable situation much, much worse.

Defying the troubles... A Silo Tank worker carries on regardless at the inauspiciously located Twin Spires industrial estate in West Belfast

PHOTOGRAPHS: KELVIN BOYES

**Silo Tank is living testimony to the fact that it is possible to survive, and even thrive, commercially in the worst of economic, social and political circumstances**

## Republic's 30-year road to recovery

THE Republic of Ireland has been transformed into Europe's fastest-growing economy, according to figures from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

During the past three years real output has risen by almost a quarter, more than three times the average increase in the remain-

der of Europe. Rapid output growth has been accompanied by significant gains in employment; indeed, more jobs have been created since 1993 than in the previous 30 years in Ireland.

At the same time, inflation has fallen, and the budget deficit remained among the OECD's lowest.

Much of the growth has been fuelled by overseas in-

vestment, particularly from America, which has helped to increase labour productivity by bringing new technology and management skills to Ireland.

Sectors which have benefited include computers, office equipment, pharmaceuticals, electrical engineering and soft drinks.

US firms have been attracted by a 10 per cent cor-

porate tax-rate — now under fire from EU partners — low wage costs and highly-skilled labour.

Almost half of all school-leavers continue into higher education, which produces proportionately the highest number of scientists and engineers among the OECD states.

The Republic's success also reflects an extended

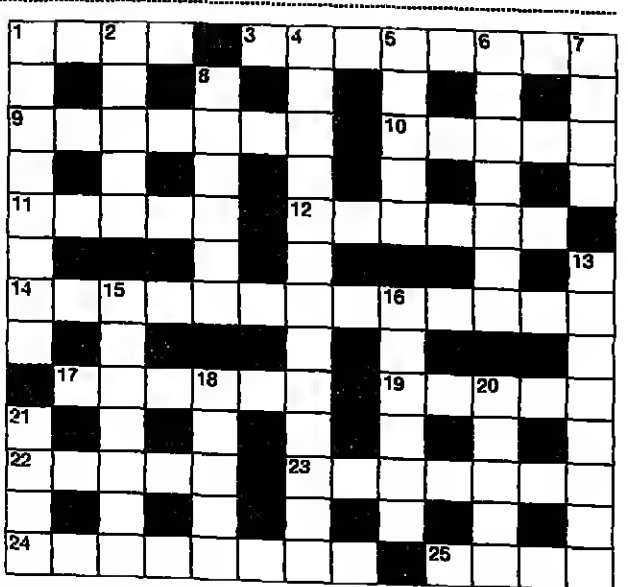
period of social consensus, covering wage agreements, which has helped reduce industrial unrest and maintain competitiveness.

This combination of circumstances has allowed the Republic of Ireland to catch up, in economic terms, it is now poised to join the first wave of countries signing up to join the euro-zone.

## Quick Crossword No. 8671

TRANSACT CASH  
1 DROOP (4)  
2 GREATLY SHOCKED (5)  
3 SPECULATOR (7)  
4 SEMI-DARKNESS — depression (5)  
5 MRS MAJOR (5)  
6 MADNESS (6)  
7 VITAL — nobody is, they say (13)  
8 FORTY WINKS (6)  
9 ROOM ON BOARD SHIP (5)  
10 MONTH — move (5)  
11 KEEP IT FLYING HERE! (3,4)

Solution No. 8670



### Across

- 1 Droop (4)
- 2 Greatly shocked (5)
- 3 Speculator (7)
- 4 Semi-darkness — depression (5)
- 5 Mrs Major (5)
- 6 Madness (6)
- 7 Vital — nobody is, they say (13)
- 8 Forty winks (6)
- 9 Room on board ship (5)
- 10 Month — move (5)
- 11 Keep it flying here! (3,4)

### Down

- 1 Sleeping car (5-3)
- 2 Madagascan primate (5)
- 3 Butterfly, lover of oaks and camom (6,7)
- 4 Inert gas (5)
- 5 Junior member of pride (4,3)
- 6 Titled lady (4)
- 7 For ever (6)

- 13 Adolescent (8)
- 14 Illustrative picture (7)
- 15 Withdraw formally (6)
- 16 Tweedledee's negative (5)
- 20 Swelling — sudden increase (5)
- 21 Struck with love (4)

Stuck? Call our solutions line on 0891 338 248. Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Service supplied by ATS



The Guardian

# the week

Saturday February 14 1998

Alexander Solzhenitsyn was once the conscience of the Soviet Union — even of the world. Then, argues his latest biographer, the artist died. The man lived on, as prophet and preacher, but only as a shadow of the great writer. **James Meek**, our Moscow correspondent, reflects on this strange afterlife, 24 years to the day since Solzhenitsyn was deported from the USSR

## A ghost that haunts our century

**I**RINA Prokhorova, editor of Russia's New Literary Review, a sort of Russian Granta, kept hearing her 16-year-old daughter laughing in her room. She found this strange. The teenager wasn't giggling at the latest Fawcett Towers or Absolutely Fabulous, which have both been shown on Russian television. She was reading The Gulag Archipelago, Alexander Solzhenitsyn's burning account of the evils inflicted by the Soviet regime on the citizens it called its own.

This was the book which has been called the most important of the 20th century, a work which obsessed the aged leadership in the autumn of Soviet communism and churned up the politics of the left in the West, part charge-sheet for a trial that never was, part polemic, part memorial to the tens of millions who were shot, starved, drowned, tortured, frozen or worked to death in the Soviet Union. And here was a young Russian girl, in 1998, laughing as she read it.

"She said it was so funny," said Prokhorova. "Her generation reads it like some kind of surreal fantasy out of Borges rather than as a description of real life. She couldn't understand when I tried to explain to her how three generations lived in this madhouse. Many of my friends say the same thing about their children. Perhaps this is the miracle of liberty. They can understand that there was a repressive regime, theoretically, but not emotionally."

The funniest passages concerned the ridiculous charges which those accused by Stalin's secret police confessed to, such as conspiring to dig a tunnel from London to Moscow so that spies could infiltrate Russia. It was hilarious, except that after the confession, the guilty party would be transported to a slave labour camp, or shot. "I understood it was absurd, too," said Prokhorova. "But I couldn't laugh."

It is three years since Solzhenitsyn and his second wife Natalya syn returned to Russia from exile in the United States. He is here, yet not here. The decline in interest in his work inside Russia, which began years before his stateless, ailing homecoming by train through Siberia, has continued. Asked to name their great 20th century writers, Russians suggest Boris Pasternak, Mikhail Bulgakov, Andrei Platonov, Anna Akhmatova, Joseph Brodsky and half a dozen other poets and novelists before they get to Solzhenitsyn, and that's if they remember him at all.

Despite plans in Moscow for a Solzhenitsyn literary prize, the writer, who will be 80 this year, does not mix with any of Moscow's

literary sets. He does not give interviews, his circle of friends has narrowed to a tiny protective circle. Now, after an early phase of polemical political and media activity, he has retreated behind the fence of his suburban Moscow home.

For the West, he used to be seen as one of the towering figures of the century, the embodiment of civilised individual resistance to totalitarian rule. Yet even in the western consciousness, this idealised colossus has begun to crumble, his reputation diminished by his reactionary views. At home and abroad, the living Solzhenitsyn has become a kind of awkward, cantankerous ghost, haunting the great Solzhenitsyn-to-be of posterity.

Until now, that is. For next week a hefty tome will arrive in the bookshops which tries to remind the world of what a great, extraordinary and driven man Alexander Solzhenitsyn is. The book's author has plunged into Solzhenitsyn's heart and mind — and sexuality — portraying his life as the personalised history of the tortured century of his country.

It is a strange coming together of minds: one of the great chroniclers of our times meets, in the shape of his biographer, one of Britain's most controversial novelists, D M Thomas. Those who don't know Thomas's work will be surprised to find the novelist best known for the powerful erotic poem in his prize-winning novel, *The White Hotel*, and once described as "the dirtiest old man in British letters", donning a hat as a Russian scholar. But he can reasonably claim to be just that. He has previously translated the poets Alexander Pushkin and Akhmatova.

What will this clash bring? How curious that Solzhenitsyn, politically rehabilitated twice already — once under Khrushchev, once under Yeltsin — should now be receiving a kind of rehabilitation of glory from a Cornish writer he has never met. And how will the Nobel Prize winner react to the fact that Thomas's reverence for his greatness does not stop him engaging in detailed, sometimes imaginatively embellished, unpicking of his relationship with women?

**T**HE VILLAGE of Troitse Lykovo, where the Solzhenitsyns live today, lies just within Moscow's outer ring road, half an hour from the centre of town if the traffic is light. Turning off the ring road you pass a messy peripheral sprawl of garages, car parts markets, a bleak Legoland of serrated apartment blocks in the distance, and a small rectangular factory with five immense funnels, like a

child's drawing of the Titanic. Then, suddenly, the sight of the city falls away and you're looking at the whitewashed walls of Troitse Lykovo's functioning Church of the Dormition.

It and one other church, the 17th century baroque Church of the Trinity, a still beautiful but derelict and crumbling building, are all that remain of the seven which once stood as part of a monastery broken up by the Bolsheviks. Archbishop Stefan, dean of the local ecclesiastical district, said another church, a wooden one dating back to the 16th century had been ceremonially burned in 1984 as an offering to atheism.

The Solzhenitsyns have attended the church, less than a mile from their house, twice. Archbishop Stefan remembered seeing them going for a walk around the Trinity Church on another occasion.

Did he read Solzhenitsyn? "Of course. He's our Russian patriot. He's one of our people. I do read him, the more so since his literature was forbidden. I used to read them when they were just photocopies," he smiled. "White letters on black paper."

It's about half a mile from the church to the Solzhenitsyn house, along a street that is half-Moscow,

half-Russia. The water pumps, the slightly subsided, lopsided wooden houses painted green and blue with white window frames with an outside toilet, a vegetable garden and a shaggy dog on guard, are of the timeless countryside. The smooth metalled road and the call boxes, and a bright blue plastic street sign hung incongruously under the ornate, weathered wooden cornice of one of the houses, are of the capital.

The Solzhenitsyns live at the end of the street behind a high green fence on a slight rise. The area was always fenced off from the little houses below Bungalows for the Communist Party elite used to stand there.

Through Natalya, Solzhenitsyn had refused a request for an interview. She had agreed to answer a faxed list of questions, but only if her answers were not used as part of a wider article with quotes from different sources. A compromise seemed possible. Then she fell ill. She wasn't expecting a visitor, but it seemed strange to be walking up to the six-foot high gates in the fence, D M Thomas's book in my hand, without ringing the bell.

Powdery snow began to fall and a breeze stirred the tops of the big Scots pines behind the fence, all

that could be seen. I rang, and a voice emerged from the square silver intercom set in the gate: Natalya Solzhenitsyn. She was deeply apologetic that she couldn't let me in. She had bed flu, she said. Her husband had seen the questions.

"These are very serious questions, about the knowledge of the past in Russia, and in principle he's interested in talking about it," said the voice, thoughtful and remorseful. "But this is a whole book, not an article. So he doesn't have the time. He's busy with other work."

D M Thomas has had to deal with being similarly rebuffed. Solzhenitsyn twice refused to be interviewed for his book. Indeed, the Solzhenitsyns are notorious for their frosty attitude towards would-be biographers.

Michael Scammell, author of an award-winning portrait of the man published in 1994, was granted extensive interviews. However, his view of the man has shifted over the years, and he now regards him as something of a tyrant in his personal behaviour. "He discarded all his friends of earlier years: he could not stand anybody of any stature around him; he was surrounded by sycophants, and still is... The people who loved and admired him all

moved away, or were pushed away, and the people who were left were second-rate flatterers."

One of the reasons the writer and his wife resent biographers is that they don't confine themselves to the public life and works of their heroes. The sympathetic portrait of Solzhenitsyn's first wife, Natasha Reshetovskaya, in Scammell's book, was painful enough.

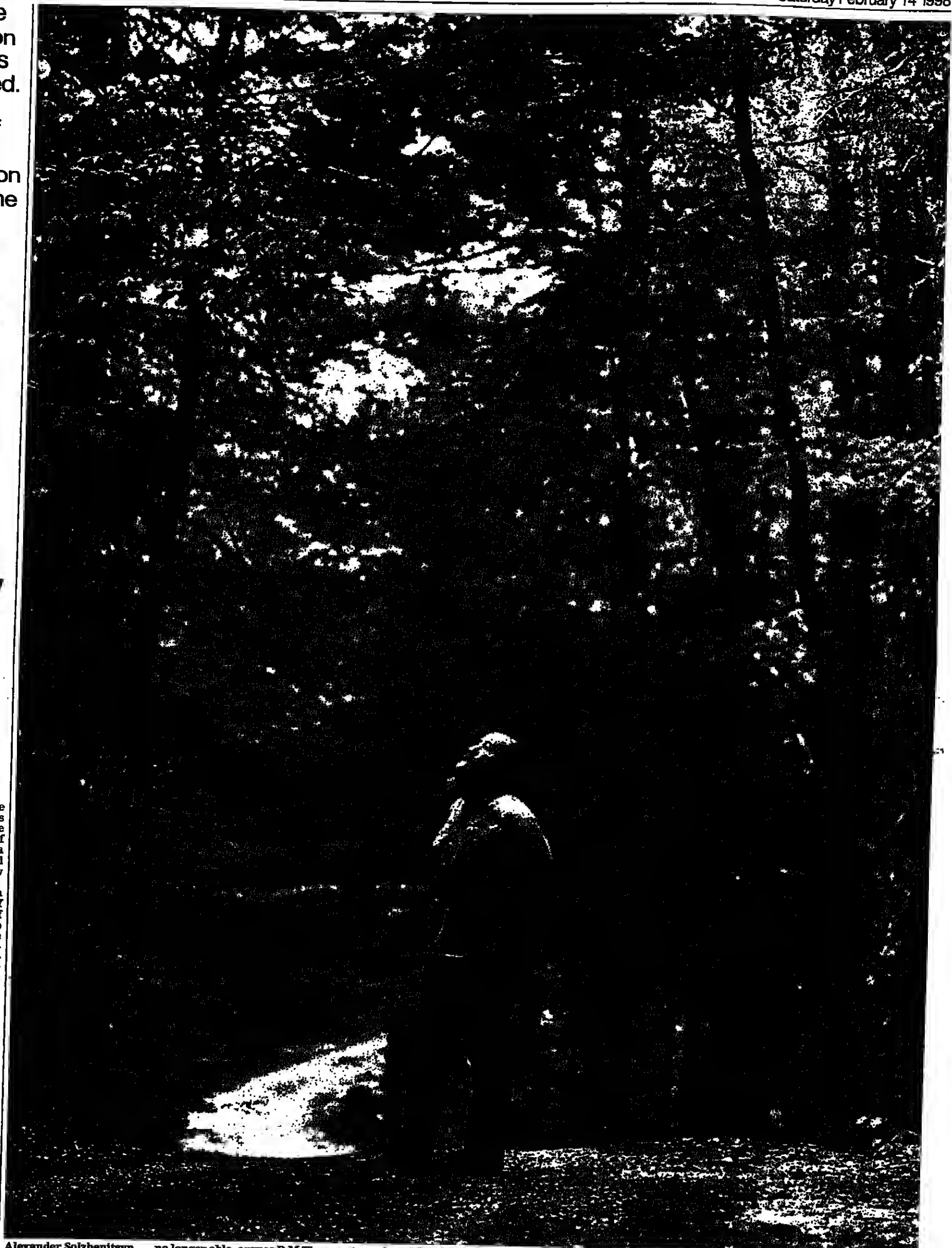
D M Thomas pushes even further. He patrols the scenes of Solzhenitsyn's life — the Rostov boyhood, the war, the Gulag, the flats and dachas and suburban trains of Brezhnevian Russia — armed with two friends from his fictive world, his imagination and Sigmund Freud. Where a reminiscence is lacking, a passage beginning "Perhaps..." or "I imagine..." will appear, and the father of psychoanalysis is always on hand to explain a relationship.

Women have played an important caring, protective role in Solzhenitsyn's life, looking after him, defending him, typing his manuscripts, executing his capricious to keep secrets from the KGB, knowing when to be at his side and when to leave him alone. He was brought up by his mother, lived with his first wife and her mother, and now lives with his second wife and her mother.

There were direct links between Solzhenitsyn's struggle with the authorities and his struggle with Reshetovskaya. At one point, when she was resisting divorce, he said that she was causing him more mental suffering than the labour camp where he served for eight years.

There were many casualties. The same book Prokhorova's daughter giggled over in 1998 filled the world for Solzhenitsyn's adoring helper Elizaveta Voronyanskaya, who said, after reading a copy of the unpublished manuscript, that "if the human race doesn't commit suicide in a fit of madness... not one thinking person will pass by this Everest of Russian literature". Fearful of discovery, Solzhenitsyn ordered her to burn her copy; she pretended she had but kept it because she loved it so much. When the manuscript was found and seized by the KGB, she hanged herself in a fit of remorse.

"Solzhenitsyn was perfectly capable of creating memorable female characters; he just does not seem very interested in creating them," says Thomas, adding that when the writer took the trouble, as in his novel *The First Circle*, the result was greatness. "In the page 14



Alexander Solzhenitsyn... no longer able, argues D M Thomas, to explore "the heart's dark forest"

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE LUSKATZ







He may have had 10 years of success hurtling through the galaxies, but Red Dwarf's Craig Charles has things in his past he wishes would go away

# Man with an eye on the future



**C**RAIG CHARLES, actor, comedian and poet, says he has been called many things in his life. "Cheeky chappy" has cropped up quite a lot. As has "Professional Scouser". In the street people sometimes shout "Oy Smee!" — the catchphrase of his character in the spoof sci-fi series Red Dwarf. Recently he played a psychopath in Lynda La Plante's The Governor and since then people have shouted "Oy nutter!" at him too. But in 1994, an ex-girlfriend, a topless dancer, called him a rapist and he hasn't struggled that one off so casually.

It's 10 years since the genesis of Red Dwarf, in which Charles plays a wise-cracking sloth called Lister, and only three since, after almost four months on remand at Wandsworth Prison, and four months on bail at his dad's in Liverpool awaiting trial, he was acquitted of the rape charge. His many fans would see much to celebrate in the former anniversary, but Charles is bored of talking about Red Dwarf — "I have to answer questions about it all my life" — and although he keeps saying "it's four years ago, it's a long time", he just won't let the other matter go. You can be talking about the death of his mother (a recurring theme in all interviews he gives) and suddenly he's telling you that the Guardian sent reporters to the housing estate where he grew up and were asking about him in the local pub. "It was like they were preparing my obituary, it was like being thrown to the wolves". Or he's waxing lyrical about his new girlfriend (the mother of his three-month-old daughter) and it's: "After what I went through, I didn't think I'd ever trust a woman again."

It's as if it's an itch he can't keep himself from scratching, no matter how many mantras, in the form of pre-packaged aphorisms, he recites. "As I say, if it doesn't kill you it makes you stronger," he says several times. "I don't want to be famous for something I didn't do. I want to be famous for things I've done. Success is always the best revenge."

He's chewing chips and pulling apart a piece of chicken with his fingers in a hotel room opposite the BBC — which has arranged a round of Red Dwarf anniversary celebrations, to be shown tonight. He's got a chubby face, a bit greasy around the mouth at the moment, and a trim body, dapperly turned out in some pinstripe trousers and a dark shirt. He's a lot of mouth and a lot of trousers — "Way to go James," he says minutes after

meeting Eamonn McCabe the photographer. He's got a selection of laughs — a k-k-ksssshhhh, a hee hee hee, and a shoulder-shaking ack ack ack, expressing irritation, or boredom or to alert you to an imminent punchline. None of them express amusement. But his body language is busy telling you he's a jolly good geezer. Relaxed with it he'll loll back on his sofa, rubbing his stomach, and then twirl his finger round in his tummy button, like he's sat here all his life. Or he'll lean forward and tap the filter of his Silk Cut on the table, a man across the bar in the pub. But he doesn't look you in the eye much.

Three men were accused of raping the ex-girlfriend early one morning at her flat in Stockwell, south London (they'd gone looking for breakfast, they said). Charles, his friend, businessman John "Jack" Peplow, and a third person called Roger who the prosecution never traced and who the defence denied ever existed. Someone is sitting in on this interview, a small man with a squashed face and a mobile phone clamped to one ear ("What form of compensation are you entitled to offer me? Okay dokey bye bye"). It turns out this is Jack Peplow, who is now Charles's personal assistant. He just watches

**'There's a lot of people I've cut out of my life since it happened. I've got a very tight circle of friends now'**

for the most part, but occasionally interjects. "We were in the same cell. On the same charge. From the same ex-girlfriend. Who I didn't kiss either. Not even on the lips." "K-ksssshhhh," says Charles. They're eating chips in an identical manner, folding them then squashing them in a mouthful at a time. "Indeed," says Peplow. "We caught that habit in jail."

But that's four years ago, it's a long time. Life is sweet now, Charles hasn't stopped working since that business. He's on game shows, he's got his own chat show, Craig's Funky Bunker, he's published The Log: A Dwarf's Guide To Everything, and a volume of his street poetry, No Other Blue. One of the poems, "I hate the way", is about a cellmate's irritating habit of grinding his teeth. "That's me," says Peplow. "I've got very strong bits. I don't react to stress much in my daily life. I take it out at night." Charles is also working on his autobiography, to be called No Irish, No Niggers, "from when my mum and dad met outside a boarding house in Liverpool with a sign up saying 'No Irish, No Niggers', me mum being Irish, me dad being black." (He may or may not

be aware that John Lydon, Johnny Rotten of the Sex Pistols, called his autobiography Rotten: No Irish No Blacks No Dogs.) Charles tells of his Liverpool upbringing, his early marriage to and divorce from the actress Cathy Tyson (with whom he has a son, Jack), the Red Dwarf story, the trial, the media circus and its aftermath. "It's very uplifting at the end," he says, "because my life is so much more rewarding than it was before this happened. Plus I've been very successful."

There have now been seven series of Red Dwarf. An eighth will be made this year, and Charles finds himself recognised "walking down streets in New York, Seattle, San Francisco, Australia...". It's dubbed into many languages. "Apparently, the guy who does me in Spanish has got this really high-pitched, gay, effeminate voice. And when I was in Lanzarote, all these gay Spaniards were chasing me up and down the beach, convinced I was gay and convinced I could speak Spanish. Ack, ack, ack." "Thought he was playing coy," says Peplow. "Hee hee hee," continues Charles.

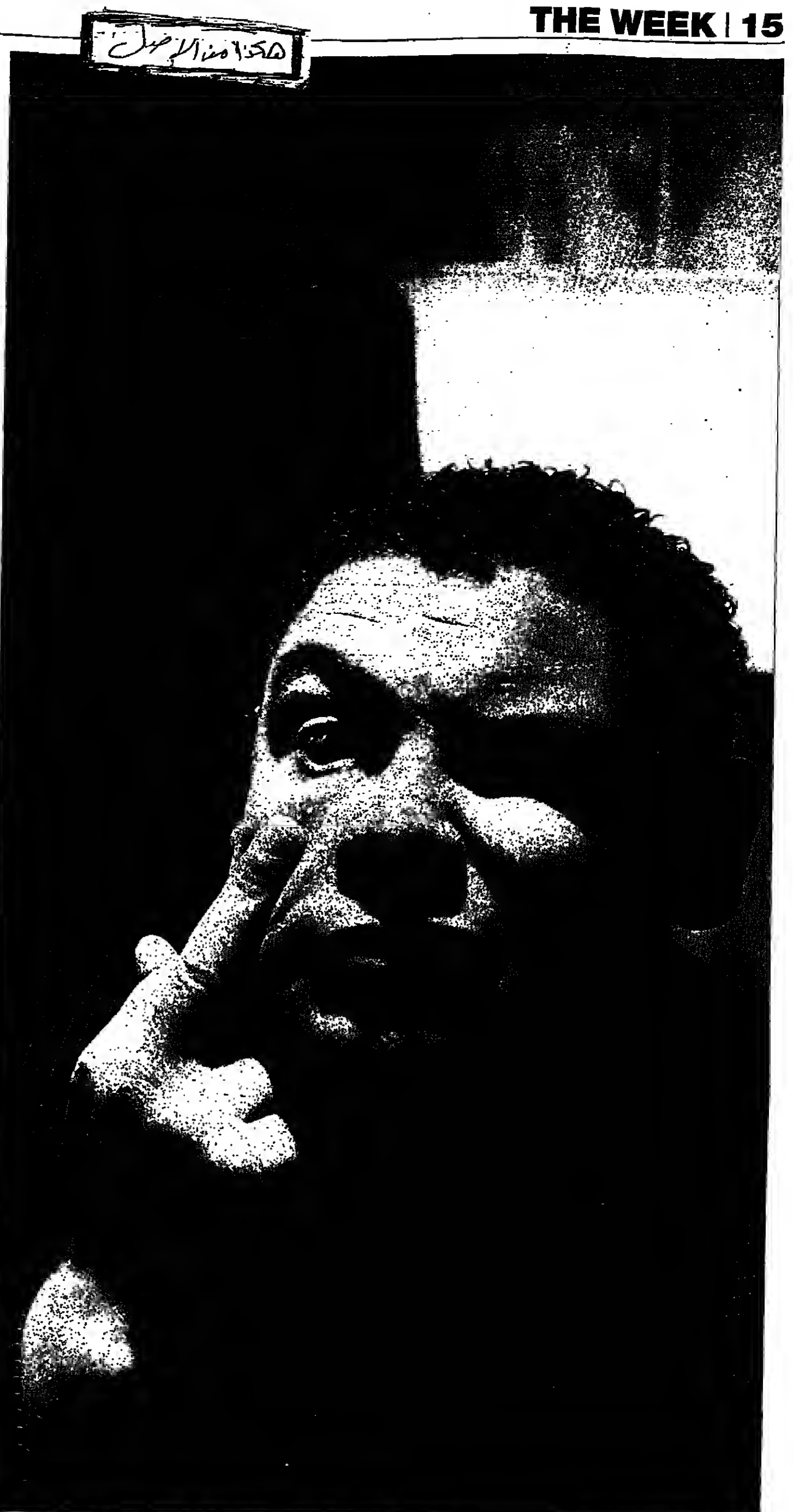
What with the merchandising and everything, Red Dwarf is a pretty lucrative gig. Charles drives around — or rather Peplow drives him around — in a two-tone (green and silver-green) Rolls Royce. "Once you've been in the back of one you don't really want to sit in the back of anything else." (Peplow: "I take it round the pub and say 'Come and see me car, boys'"). As well as his pad in Kensington, he's bought himself a country estate in Somerset complete with medieval wood and deer (he is against hunting with dogs). "Yes, I say, 'I have deer on me land. No, you can't eat them.'"

A certain amount of change appears to have taken place in his social life too. He has broken up with his fiancée Linda Hawer, a former stripper, who stood by him through the trial (he loved her "truly, madly, deeply," he told the News of the World at the time) and is now truly madly deeply in love with Jacqueline Jennings, a former head of advertising at the Irish Independent. He met her while he was filming The Governor in Dublin, and persuaded her to leave behind "her lovely house and company car" and move to London with him.

"She's everything I've ever wanted. She's bright, intelligent — very intelligent — beautiful, great cook, great lover. A lot more sophisticated than women I've been associated with in the past." What with the baby they don't go out much now. "I passed out when my kittens were born. I did. Kittens are born in this little bag and then they chew their way out. It's means clean. Like in Smeg oven!"

He says, "I'm new man, me." He knows about mastitis and that it's worse than childbirth because "you can't take an epidural for it! Tee hee hee". He claims to have a photographic memory, but that sometimes "I can't even remember where I was last night — after a few drinks, of course."

He was at the birth of his daughter. "I was George Clooney, I was. I was George Clooney! First push I could see it's head. I was convinced I would pass out. I passed out when my kittens were born. I did. Kittens are born in this little bag and then they chew their way out. It's means clean. Like in Smeg oven!"



Lister hysteria... "I don't want to be famous for what I didn't do. I want to be famous for things I've done." PHOTOGRAPH: EAMONN MCCABE

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like something out of Alien. I just went ughooc, bang. Didn't half crack me head as well. I was 20 minutes late when Jack was born, which didn't go down too well, but it wasn't my fault. I was filming Red Dwarf in a flint mine in Wales. Got the call that Cathy had gone into labour and it was like right. OK, into the car and off. We would have got there on time if the guy hadn't taken the wrong turning..."

It's like listening to a stand-up routine, one thing leading to another, anecdote to joke in endless rotation. And the tone doesn't change, whatever his subject, so you wonder where his real feelings

lie. About his mother dying, he says, "It was a horrible death, cancer. She went to heaven in little bags. First it was a hysterectomy...". He'd told another journalist this, almost word for word, so I tell him I've read him say that before. But he just throws me a glance, as if I'm a heckler, and continues right on. "...and then it was a colostomy and then it was in the brain. They cut her away slowly but surely."

But then maybe it all comes back to that experience again. He has learnt to hold his feelings close. "There's a lot of people I've cut out of my life since it hap-

pened," he says. "I've got a very tight circle of friends now. And that's all I really relate to and socialise with and that's the way I like it. People can let you down. But people handle things like that differently. And, you know, I've got to get on with the rest of my life. I've come through it and I've got no bitterness about it. I'm not as naive as I was. But I'm not a twisted mess."

Red Dwarf Night is at 9pm on BBC2 tonight. BBC Worldwide has remastered the first three series of Red Dwarf. Series One, volume 1 and 2, are available from Monday at £12.99 each.

## SIMON HOGGART'S WEEK



**Savouring the unique taste of fresh country Pot Noodle**

**T**HE news this week that half of all rural food shops have closed in the past six years is saddening, but hardly surprising. The average country shop these days is a depressing place. There was one shop in Berkshire I used to go to which contained nothing, absolutely nothing, that was fresh. The fields around, at various times of year, were full of gambolling lambs, contented cows slopping with rich and creamy milk, fat snorting pigs, golden fields of corn and bright red apples, but the shop sold little but Pot Noodle, packet soups, oven chips, oily crisps and Mother's Pride. If the average country shop has a produce section, it generally contains wrinkled mushrooms, limp lettuce and flaccid potatoes, already sprouting.

The nearby farmers could have got together and formed a co-operative to sell fresh local meat, home-made sausages and fruit which had been on a tree that day, but why should they? All the good stuff is snapped up in bulk by supermarkets. You can get Ye Olde

Hand-Raised Traditional Malton Mowbray Pork Pie made with 95 per cent Organically Fed English Pork in Didbury or Edgworth, but not in a Leicestershire village.

**MEANWHILE** all shops are dementedly diversifying. Just as the Gas Company will now sell you electricity, and vice-versa, so few stores stick to their nominal business. This week a friend went to hire a video at a big video store. One assistant was selling a hot dog, another was taking in a film for developing, and the third was repairing the Dunkin' Donuts Machine. Defeated, she crept home and watched TV instead.

THE rock singer who emptied a bucket of ice water over John Prescott could hardly have chosen a more satisfactory target. (Isn't there something wonderfully dim about a vegetarian changing his name to "Nobacon"? We militant carnivores could call ourselves "Nobroc" or "Tofusucks".) Mr Prescott was a good choice, not

because he will have been convinced of the error of his ways, but because he is so magnificently sensitive. Days later, he was still raging about the incident to anyone he met. In the past, politicians thought that being assaulted by extremists was a badge of honour. Not him.

Mr Prescott, in spite of his rough, bluff non-nonsense image, is terrifically sensitive to slights. He is rightly proud of being a working class lad, a former bar steward, who hauled himself up to become a student at Oxford and is now deputy Prime Minister. Yet, he feels, this extraordinary achievement makes him even more the target of harmful barbs and slights.

This can take surprising forms. Last year, I went to a reception for a new Prescott biography, and while he made a graceful and amusing short speech, I was watching him, courteously I thought. After a while I noticed that he kept making eye contact, so faintly embarrassed, I looked at his shoes instead. Later I heard that he'd complained to the

book's author, "that fellow in the Guardian, you know the one, has his picture on page 2, he kept trying to put me off by staring at me..." No wonder Mr Nobacon's attack has made him so lastingly furious.

**ONCE** again, the House of Lords has performed a valuable service by adding the anti-Rupert Murdoch amendment to the competition bill.

**No party in power will ever allow a reformed Upper House to bugger up its plans like the Lords did this week**

This will now force the Government to show its obsequious support for Murdoch by killing off the amendment in the Commons, and will give a welcome opportunity for several Labour MPs who put principle above ambition to vote in favour of it.

Of course the House of Lords is an absurd anachronism. I entirely sympathise with people who experience something close to physical pain at the idea of a legislature packed with hereditary peers. It's appalling. But does anyone imagine that things will improve when it is instead stuffed with party placemen — as it certainly will be? You can be absolutely certain of one thing: no party in power will ever allow a reformed upper house to bugger up its plans like the Lords did this week.

THE other week I mentioned the dim poster ads for Boston's Logan Airport, with the slogan "You're in New England when you land!" The last showed a Pilgrim Father guiding a plane to the gate, and the latest has a Cape Cod fisherman in yellow oilskins shining a passenger's shoes. It's grotesque. But remember: the man who invented that dippy ad earns much more than you, and his wages come out of your plane tickets.

**I**WORK on the assumption that if someone is attacked by the Daily Mail, they must be an adornment to society, so when the paper ran a whole page raging against Zoe Ball, I tried her Radio One breakfast show for a spell. As anyone would suspect, far from her being a foul-mouthed Medusa of the airwaves, she turned out to be a chirpy, teenage-sounding person, her boastful references to booze and snogging par for the course among the 15-year-old girls in any school playground.

But after a while I noticed something curious. There were requests for boyfriends ("He's been on board a merchant ship for the past four months") as in Two-Way Family Favourites; there were wacky noises, like the Goons, and a humorous cleaning lady, straight out of ITMA. Even Ms Ball's slightly upper crust accent recalls a distant past. The show pretends to be on the cutting edge of broadcasting; in fact it's a throwback to the Golden Age of Radio, and made me quite nostalgic.



# It's just not cricket

HEAD TO HEAD: SHOULD WOMEN BE ALLOWED TO JOIN THE MCC?



**Yes**

**Rachael Heyhoe Flint**  
Former England women's cricketer



**No**

**Adrian Fort**  
Individual member of the MCC

Dear Adrian,

After seven years, the MCC is revisiting the contentious issue of whether or not women should be allowed to seek membership. The club has existed for 211 years so I suppose it's not before time.

The MCC is the mecca of world cricket. It is perceived as having a "stuffy" image because of its all-male membership. The current President, Colin Langley Mackenzie, and his full general committee believe that image will change if the club agrees to reform its constitution and allow women in.

In 1991 I attempted to join, supported by four enthusiastic high-profile MCC sponsors: Sir Jack Hayward (Honorary Life Member and chief donor to the first indoor MCC cricket school), Tim Rice (now Sir and on the MCC general committee), Denis Amis (ex England Warwickshire opener and now chief executive of Warwickshire) and the late Brian Johnston (doyen of cricket broadcasters).

We failed to reach the required two-thirds majority. The vote was 2,500 for the motion, 4,500 against, 10,000 disinterested members failed to return their postal voting papers — they obviously cared so deeply about their club that they couldn't be bothered to vote!

Successful presidents and committees since then have failed to urge the change of constitution, yet last year the MCC had a Lottery application for a £4.5 million grant to rebuild the Grand Stand at Lord's rejected by the Sports Council because of its all-male membership. The money was subsequently raised by the members through a subscription scheme.

The MCC committee and president feel the time has come to modernise the club's image and attract a wider range of sponsorship and grants. The ballot of every member will take place in 10 days time. I hope you can support us.

Yours sincerely,  
Rachael Heyhoe Flint,  
Former captain,  
England women's cricket team

Dear Rachael,

I read with interest your special plea for women MCC members. If some people think that the MCC has a stuffy image, does it really

matter? Lord's is the Mecca of world cricket partly because its essence and tradition, and foster the atmosphere of camaraderie which benefits so many followers of sport.

The views I'm expressing are my personal ones but, in my opinion, clubs for men only or women only reflect a natural separation of interests. Birds of a feather, of both sexes, understandably like places where they can enjoy sport among their fellows. Cricket is at heart a man's game and the MCC is consequently a masculine institution. Introducing women members would alter the essence of the club, probably for ever. And for what? Political correctness and outside money with strings attached.

How nice, by contrast, that, having been spurned by the Lottery distributors expressing their particular prejudices, the members raised off their own bat the money for rebuilding the Grand Stand.

The desire for this change seems to stem from the hope of sponsorship and grants. If the members value the customs that make Lord's so special, about a larger income, more power to their elbow. They will be exercising the right, perhaps the duty to preserve what Lord's has given to them and to hand it to future members.

Yours sincerely,  
Adrian Fort  
Member of the MCC

Dear Adrian,

Spoken like a true die-hard MCC member! I'm sorry to disagree with you but as far as cricket is concerned, and especially at Lord's, there is a common interest between men and women. You only have to look at the packed grandstands and hospitality areas to realise that thousands of women watch major cricket at Lord's — and I bet they watch more avidly than many of the men who seem to spend a great deal of time at the bar — and path their heads in the picnic hampers (which of course have been packed by those very same women folk who want to prevent becoming members of the MCC).

Women have had and continue to have an influence on the great game of cricket: women invented round-arm bowling in 1605 (and MCC adopted the technique 60 years later); WG Grace was coached by his mother Martha; the Women's



Cricket Association introduced the first World Cup of Cricket in 1973 (two years before the men's World Cup was inaugurated) and England women have twice won it — a feat not yet achieved by our men.

My husband is an MCC member and I would love to sit with him in the pavilion when we go to Test matches. He has voted in favour of women joining the MCC — he marked his voting paper as I threatened him with my bat!

The English Cricket Board is welcoming the WCA into its administration. So come on MCC, vote us in and I promise we will behave ourselves. There is nothing to be anxious about. We could have a very civilising effect on cricket as a whole. No woman would wish to apply for membership just for the sake of achieving a breakthrough. To have a mixed membership will give the MCC in a much more favourable light in the public eye, which is important if the MCC is to maintain the respect it is accorded as custodian of the game throughout the world. And you can't forever expect your members to fund match-related development and expansion of facilities.

Yours,  
Rachael

Dear Rachael,

I speak not as a die-hard but as a Reasonable Man, and am expressing no loyalties to any particular group. I have noted the way your husband will vote, but am sorry to

hear that you had to threaten him with a cricket bat. A vote under compulsion may not count.

It's nice that many women watch cricket at Lord's, with their children and husbands, and the simple standard is there to meet that demand. Facilities are made available for their enjoyment, including the delectable picnic hampers which you describe.

However, it does not therefore follow that membership of the host organisation must be opened to one and all. It is wholly reasonable that certain areas or privileges should be retained for members or benefactors of an institution, without those members being morally or financially pressurised to open wide their membership, or to change their ways.

No one doubts your claim for the civilising influence of women, and the fine example they give by staying out of the bars and facing the front. However, there are times and places when people like to be among their fellows, and to be allowed to keep the door closed.

Yours,  
Adrian

Dear Adrian,

All our First Class countries now have women members; Melbourne Cricket Club allows women into its sacred Australian Test match venue pavilion. I could go on. Your president and your whole general committee wish you to support their proposition. Many of

my friends are on that committee and they now feel their doors should be opened so that they are credited as being a modern, forward-thinking governing body. MCC will continue to invest resources in the betterment of our glorious game. There might come a time when they need huge grant aid. The male members can still have their own closet in the pavilion for sanctuary and meditation if that's what they really want.

Yours,  
Rachael

Dear Rachael,

What you really disclose is that you feel people should toe the latest line in fashionable opinion, and not resist the trend of the day. I simply don't believe that's a big enough reason. Quite likely such institutions have themselves made the change, mainly on the grounds that everyone else seems to be doing it: don't let the left out, the "marketing gurus" won't like it!

Private individuals should resist being bowed by official singing the latest song. Cricket has always benefited from independent minds, and personally I would hope the MCC ignores the gusts of fashion.

That in no way reflects on the contribution all sorts of people make in different ways to the game: not least by buying things from shops. Supporters of Amnesty International run the risk of being woken in the night by peevish cyn-

**JEREMY HARDY**



**Give me old anarchists in the UK any time**

The Brit Awards are a bewildering spectacle, with or without George Robertson jiggling about on camera. The ceremony has been vastly tarred up since its beginnings and it is now such a festively crafted television that it seems strangely un-British. There is something alienating about it, like hearing one's voice on tape and finding it unfamiliar. You recognise that these people are British, but their excitability would be so much more appropriate if they weren't. It's a problem with our accents. I keep wanting someone to approach the microphone and say, "There is a lost child, so will the parents of Thomas please make their way to the St John's ambulance tent."

"The Brit" is a title with which I've never felt comfortable, although it is arguably snappier than the one that preceded it, which was something like "Her Majesty The Queen's Record and Tape Gold Medal Achievement Awards for Singing Audibly and Clearly". I am sure at an age when I would prefer the older style of presentation, I find myself watching the bands and thinking, "He must be awfully hot wearing that; he should really take it off now, otherwise he won't feel the heat."

There is a long-established tradition of youth culture being presented to the nation by middle-aged white people who, it is clear, would offer a horrifying sight if they were at any stage to start dancing. Somehow the grown-ups can't let the young people "do their own thing" — I am told the modern resistance has it, without qualifying it in some way. There is always an atmosphere of, "Well, I'm sure we've all had a great deal of fun this year, but let's not forget about our exams."

But then, many pop stars are themselves not terribly young. They never have been. Bill Haley like Spencer Tracey was always old. So were quite a lot of the punks. And members of Chumbawamba, whose heroic Danbert Nobacon became the star of this year's Brits by dronching John Prescott, have met with some derision in this paper for being over 30.

The band also gave a magnificent performance of their hit: Tubthumping, typically inserting the words, "New Labour sold out the dockers, just like they'll sell out the rest of us." But Dan Glaister, the Guardian's Arts Correspondent, never has been. Bill Haley like Spencer Tracey was always old. So were quite a lot of the punks. And members of Chumbawamba, whose heroic Danbert Nobacon became the star of this year's Brits by dronching John Prescott, have met with some derision in this paper for being over 30.

ies saying, "Comfortable are we? I don't suppose political prisoners get much sleep." Mr Glaister probably thinks that if Danbert were a genuine anarchist he would have forgotten to bring the loud-hailer and accidentally left the bucket in the van.

But I digress. Danbert has not met with widespread hostility. After all, it was only water. John Prescott is not the sort of man one could get with anything that might stain or hurt. He's the one you can't help liking, although his disproportionate outrage showed a new side to him. He then made things worse by issuing a statement to allege that his concern had been for the equanimity and dryness of the "womenfolk". Not being totally dry is, as we know, the ultimate horror for womenfolk, which is why the one-way dry-weave top-sheet gives them so much confidence and security. Womenfolk are clearly creatures who have fainting fits and die of embolism when they are thirsty. The Mirror demonstrated its slavish devotion to the Government by sending a reporter to throw a bucket of water at Danbert. How could anyone miss the point so badly? Prescott is deputy prime minister. Danbert is not. The gestures are not equivalent. Rather, for New Labour's sycophant hacks to allege Prescott thus is comparable to GBC shareholders picketing a meeting of the Campesin Against the Arms Trade and shouting, "There, see how much you like it." Moreover, Danbert was arrested for his prank; the Mirror reporter, of course, was not.

So, tabloid fury isn't going to work in this context. Neither will it be possible to neutralise the band by assimilating them into media

**There is a tradition of youth culture being presented by middle-aged white people**

culture, as was done with Swampy. There are too many of them. The Tory press will not be able turn them into amiably risible but committed cranks who, it can be revealed, lived with their parents when they were children. Chumbawamba are probably too old, and therefore too wise, to allow themselves to be made cute.

The poll which showed that it is the young who are keenest to see Britain bombing Iraq, should not come as a great surprise. The Government is creating a society in which teenagers are so worried about their pension arrangements to think about the state of the world. Moreover, people aged 65 and upwards have experience of aerial bombardment; those under 25 do not. It may be true for a few people that the second world war was the best time of their lives, but most of them are Swiss.

And it is a tremendous myth that the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s was dominated by young people. We were misfits of all ages and we won the argument. We were let down by Labour leaders who knifed in the back the agreed policy of their own party. Now history has been written: it is forgotten that about half the population wanted rid of cruise and Trident missiles. We are asked to believe that now have a realist in Tony "Call me Monica" Blair. Realism means wasting £1.5 billion a year on Trident while at the same time threatening to massacre many thousands of people under the pretence that Britain is opposed to weapons of mass destruction. Give me ageing anarchists any day.

## Get the British angle on European affairs



### SMALLWEED

GOOD MORNING, and welcome to Smallweed, the column with Elinor Gloom. A reader asks why I bear the name of an unsavoury person in Dickens. Our names are given us, Madam, we do not choose them. I might have been born Jonas Chuzzlewit; would that not have been worse?

Being smitten about the sinuses, I have spent much of the week with the audiotapes of the BBC Radio 4 production of Martin Chuzzlewit: nine hours in all, and most of it rich entertainment. Patricia Hayes plays Sarah Gamp as if my creator had written the part specifically for her. More controversially, Christopher Beolain plays Pecksniff much of the time as if he had modelled his pitch on Sir Patrick Maybew, whose plummy tones would have been very familiar at the time they made

these recordings, when he was Northern Ireland secretary. I'm sure there was no intention of attributing anything Pecksniffian to Sir E who I always thought a pretty decent old stick, if a little stiff, as sticks tend to be. But to any old political hand...

A pedant writes: What on earth do you mean, "the column with Elinor Gloom"? Where is this "elfin glow" to be found? Can you lead me to it?

Smallweed responds in the manner of Mr Pecksniff: Why, gladly, my dear old friend. It is one of the many qualities which Tina Brown, editor of the New Yorker, and one of the few alive to have been named after an acronym, detected this week in our Premier.

A Y ES: ACRONYMS! The very sight of the things is far from being congenial to a delicate mind, as Pecksniff remarks of skittles. On the very day when a team of scientists produced fresh evidence validating the existence of RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury), Home Office ministers published plans to create a fresh brace of criminal offences in place of Grievous and Actual Bodily Harm, those relics of Dickens's day. And what are they to be called? Why, Intentional Serious Injury (ISI) and Reckless Serious Injury: RSI again. On Smallweed's arith-

metic (which is fallible, as readers may have noticed by now), there are something like 17,000 possible variations of three initials. Couldn't the Home Office choose something else? Though I have to admit that a travel through the thesaurus has left me a little adrift of the elfin glow of triumph. Rash Serious Injury? Same problem. Headstrong? Slapdash? Madcap? Not really synonyms. I am toying with Wanton. Alternatively Repetitive Strain could find a new acronym: Iterative Strain Injury (ISI) — that would do very nicely.

A pedant writes: But that would give the same acronym as Intentional Serious Injury. Smallweed unfelingly snorts: I might have known you would spoil things.

WHY, HIGHLY-TIGHTY, girl is these your manners? You want a pitcher of cold water throw'd over you to bring you round; that's my belief. — Mrs Gamp. A prophecy came: in my view of the inundation of Prescott at this week's Brit Awards. "How can Chumbawamba win?" a letter to the Guardian moaned this week. How can they lose? Can we really suppose that the fellow with the cropped pate and the elfin black miniskirt who strode through some airport festooned with photographers would have had one squillooth of this publicity had

the water remained in its sewer? It has even brought Delbert Nobacon to the notice of fugies like Smallweed: until now I'd ever thought of Nobacon at all it was merely to assume that he wrote the works of Shakespeare.

SPEAK as I find, Mr Smallweed! Forbid it should be otherways! — Mrs Gamp. It was good to find that the first British TV and radio reporter to get through to the earthquake-ravaged region of North Afghanistan about of by things Alan Little. There is nothing especially memorable about Alan Little. If I met him in the street I would never recognise him. He never does anything showy; he tells the story simply, without confidence or phony drama, just as it hits him. Even in an age drunk on personality, that is what foreign reporting, especially in the face of such tragedy, ought to be all about. So much to be preferred to the kind of performance in which some far more famous reporters specialise, where passages of their texts are read as if marked nobilitate or lacrimoso even, so that what you get is not so much the event as the event seen through the eyes of Michael-Nicholson-News-At-Ten. Alan Little has not forgotten the good old rule: never get between us and the story, which is why I revere him.

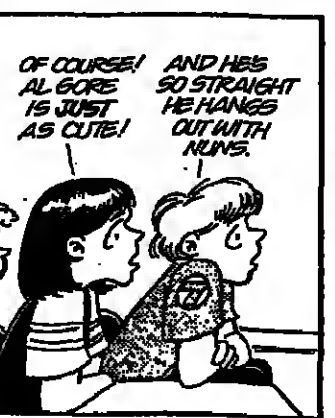
WE COMPLAINED before about the use of the designation "poet" for the rhymer who records the struggles of Barnsley FC. This week he issued a "poem" in praise of the club's beleaguered goalkeeper, David Watson, in the course of which he claimed the custodian's name was a hard one to rhyme with. Highly-tighty, girl! Quite apart from the use of a pair of words (as in: "a keeper who's got bet pots on"), there's an open goal in front of him in the shape of that Keats of the commentary box, the sainted John Motson. For myself, I may put my name forward as official poet for Cowdenbeath, whose elfin glow in these last few weeks is the talk of Fifeshire.

On the morning of January 31 they were last in Scottish division three with only 13 points and 11 goals in 19 games. Since then they've won 6 at Queen's Park, 3-1 at home to St Johnstone, and 2-0 at home to Albion Rovers. And the crowd for the Arbroath game soared to 2491! Which would have been 250 had Smallweed not stayed in the South because of his sinuses. So much for the witty riposte of one of the local MPs — someone called Gordon Brown — who when asked by the club if he'd help them get the money to build an all-seater stadium allegedly replied: "Certainly, I'll buy you a three-piece suite."

### Doonesbury



### BY GARRY TRUDEAU



### THE WORST OF MY WEEK ...

...SAYS TV PRESENTER JOHN STAPLETON: "Come when I was told that The Time Place, the chat show I've been presenting for the last eight years, was getting the chop. I feel desperately sorry for the team, some of whom will lose their jobs. And I will miss terribly the wonderful and wacky people we've had on the show. But after 27 years in this darn but exhilarating business, nothing surprises me any more. Nor does it drive me into deep despair. After all, it's only telly."

John Little 1:50







# Profits and loss

This painting was seized from its Jewish owner by the Nazis. Now New York's District Attorney has impounded it pending a criminal trial. If the DA wins, \$25 billion worth of looted art could be reclaimed from galleries and collectors all over the world.

By Gaby Wood

**T**he war is over," Egon Schiele is said to have told his sister as he was dying, "and I must go. My paintings will be shown in all the museums of the world." He couldn't have known, though, by what means his paintings would arrive there, and over the past few weeks (30 years after Schiele's death) their provenance has stirred up moral storms and legal battles for the museums of the world.

The story has unfurled like an improbable epic novel: a tale of generations and genocide, which hinges on the disturbing work of an expressionist painter, with appearances put in by a Jewish comedian, a German private eye, an art dealer irrepressible to the point of obsession, a millionaire with divided loyalties; politicians, collectors, Nazis.

Egon Schiele: The Leopold Collection, Vienna was on display at New York's Museum of Modern Art from mid-October to the beginning of January this year. The trouble arose on January 7, the day the artworks were to be shipped back to Europe. Two Jewish families living in New York each claimed that a painting in the exhibition had been stolen from a relative by the Nazis during the war. MOMA replied that it was not their policy to enquire about provenance. Dr Rudolf Leopold, whose collection it is, said he had bought every painting in good faith, but that he was willing (and this is very unusual) to be bound by an international fact-finding tribunal. Later that day Robert Morgenthau, Manhattan's District Attorney, issued a subpoena preventing the works from returning to Vienna, and began a criminal investigation. There is no known precedent for a legal suit over artworks being treated as a criminal, rather than a civil, case. Leopold immediately withdrew his offer of cooperating with an international tribunal.

The art world is shocked, since cultural properties on loan in New York are indemnified against seizure by state law. But that particular law, it seems, is open to interpretation. When questioned, the DA's office replied that they were simply investigating stolen property within their jurisdiction. MOMA has insisted on the terms of the immunity offered by the New York Legislature and has moved to quash the subpoena, saying they are contractually obliged to return the paintings. A grand jury is set for March 5.

**E**gon Schiele, master of the sickened, slouching and twisted, was born in 1890 in a small town on the Danube. His father, a railroad controller, died of syphilis (having infected four of Egon's siblings) when Schiele was 14. Schiele is often supposed, on the evidence of his drawings, to have been a sexual pervert, but he was said by one friend to be "one of the most normal people" he had ever known.

Schiele's drawings, however, were not the only evidence used against him. He attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna (the year after Schiele arrived, a would-be student failed the entrance exam, then failed it again the next year; there was nothing for it — young Adolf Hitler had to turn to other pursuits) and, in 1911, moved with his lover Wally Neuzil to his mother's home town of Krumsau. Their living in sin, compounded by his choice of teenage girls as nude models for his work, meant that they were driven from the place before long.

It was in Krumsau that Schiele painted the sombre block of a landscape known as Dead City III, which later came into the possession of Fritz Grunbaum, who owned it when the second world war broke out. Grunbaum was a Jewish art collector and comedian; he died at Dachau concentration



Schiele's portrait of his lover, Wally Neuzil, seized by Nazi art dealer Friedrich Welz... Below, left to right, Schiele, Leopold and Morgenthau

camp in 1940. His relative Rita Reif, a semi-retired New York Times arts reporter, is now asking that the painting be restored to Grunbaum's heirs.

The next place Schiele and Wally settled in offered no safe haven: Neulengbach. Schiele was arrested on charges of kidnapping and rape, and eventually convicted of disseminating pornographic art (he spent a total of 34 days in jail). Wally, who had been a model for Schiele's mentor Gustav Klimt, was the first love of Schiele's life. The most ardent and successful collector of Schiele is Rudolf Leopold, a 72-year-old retired Austrian ophthalmologist. Leopold has the largest collection anywhere in the world (more than 250 paintings and drawings from that artist's brief life) and has said he will never stop buying Schiele's. His means of acquiring them are legendary — stories are told of him paying much less than what he knew to be their worth, of making phone calls in the middle of the night, of waiting on an art owner's doorstep until she returned, late from the theatre, of flying to Austria to persuade someone to sell, and fighting off competitors by impersonating members of the owner's family on the phone.

In 1994, Leopold sold his collection to the Austrian government, to whom he owed years' worth of national wealth tax. They arrived at a deal for the sale, whereby Leopold receives a salary as director for life of the museum which the government is building to house his collection. He is also to receive \$175 million in instalments.

He has been sued successfully once before, by Schiele's sister, who claimed that he had persuaded her to give him some drawings she had inherited in exchange for some less valuable oil paintings which he had.

The man stuck in the middle of the Schiele dispute is Ronald Lauder, heir to the Estée Lauder cosmetics empire (according to Forbes magazine he is worth \$2.4 billion), chairman of MOMA, chairman of World Jewish Congress's Commission for Art Recovery and brother of the chairman of the Whitney Museum. Lauder is a collector of Schiele himself and is acquainted with Leopold; he helped to bring the paintings to New York, and paid half the exhibition costs. Both of the bodies he chairs are engaged in the legal battle (one against the other), and Lauder has taken no stand on the matter.

The particulars of ownership

are the province of the grand jury trial, and will have to be awaited. Meanwhile, the aspect of the case that has been most discussed, and most publicised, is the question of whether art loans will ever be possible again — whether new risks and new restrictions will mean that the world's art can't be shared with the rest of the world. There would be serious international financial losses as a result of this: many collections survive by lending to the US. However, the possible death of museum culture is perhaps insignificant compared to the deaths and lives of the people being remembered in these paintings. What the confiscation of the paintings really signals is that we are now benefiting from the crimes of the Nazis.

The continuing rawness of the Holocaust is testified to in the surge of memoirs published in the last couple of years: in Daniel Goldhagen's controversial book, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, which argued, to put it crudely, that all Germans were responsible; and in the discovery last year of Nazi gold in Switzerland. Two books have been published on Nazi art theft — Lynn Nicholas's *The Rape of Europe* (1994) and Hector Feliciano's *The Lost Museum* (1997) —

and more are in the works. On the subject of Egon Schiele, alone there has been, in the last couple of years, a novel, a dance piece, an album and a film. There is a renewed urgency now, before the century's end, or before the generation who experienced those years expires, to "remember", or as the Bible's command goes: "Zakhor!"

**T**o get to the lives behind the paintings, or at least the people entwined with one of them, I went to visit one of the claimants — Henry Bondi, the 75-year-old nephew of Lea Bondi Jaray. We had tea at the Bondi house in Princeton, NJ, and slowly, good-humouredly, he drew me back into that time.

Henry Bondi remembers the portrait of Wally very well. When he saw it as a child, it reminded him of his sister: "The same doe eyes and unrequited melancholy." He remembers his aunt's gallery in Vienna (she knew Schiele and was a good friend of Klimt, both of whose work she exhibited) and the gallery she set up in London when she fled in 1939 ("Conditions were terrible, especially after Kristallnacht"), where she exhibited an unknown artist called Henry Moore. He remembers his aunt as "a tough bird — funny, but also very serious and very cutting".

Lea Bondi Jaray's gallery was seized after the Anschluss by a small-time Nazi art dealer named Friedrich Welz. The painting in question was not there, though, it was in her house. He claimed that too. She protested. Her husband warned that they should leave it alone — they were about to flee, and, he said, "you know what he can do to us". Bondi set up her gallery in London and returned to Vienna in 1946 to reclaim her paintings. She sued successfully for some, but Wally, which meant a great deal to her, had been taken from Welz (then being held by American officials as a war crimes suspect) and was in the collection of the Belvedere, the Austrian National Gallery. Leopold acquired it in a trade involving several paintings in 1956.

As Bondi and I spoke, there was something I couldn't get straight in my head. In 1946, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York was asked to estimate the value of all the art plundered by the Nazis during the war. The figure arrived at, and published, was \$2.5 billion (\$25

billion in today's dollars), or more than the value of all the art then in the United States. It is known that more than 20 years after the beginning of the war, all looted families received compensation from the Federal Republic of Germany — based on half of the art works' market value in 1940. What else, I wondered, was done? "That's a very good question," ponders Bondi. "There was no 'due process of law'. I could never understand why this question didn't come up at the Nuremberg trials."

"There was a big art collector in Vienna, same name as mine, only with a 'y' — Oscar Bondy, my aunt knew him very well. When the Nazis moved in, his collection, and Baron Rothschild's, which were old collections, were confiscated by Goering and Hitler. So killing Jews and confiscating art somehow went together. I could never understand that nobody ever wrote about this. Why? Why was nothing ever done about it?"

Both Nicholas's and Feliciano's books state that art theft figured prominently at Nuremberg. But there doesn't seem to have been a separate category, it arose as part of the rubric "pillaging of public and private property". Bondi's point is that something of such

"officially stated magnitude" should have been dealt with in its own right. I ask him if he knows of deaths directly connected to art theft, if people were killed just for their collections.

"Oh, yes, of course," he says, and tells me the story of Fritz Gutmann. Gutmann was a collector who lived in Holland. He thought his family would be protected from the Nazis because he was very high up in the German banking system and had connections. In 1943 a German officer came to the Gutmann house to say they were being granted safe passage to Italy via the gas chambers. Fritz Gutmann and his wife Louise were given first-class tickets, and their daughter Lilli was expecting them at the train station in Florence. Lilli met every train for the next several days. Her parents' carriage had been re-routed to Berlin, where they were transferred to a train bound for the concentration camp at Theresienstadt. Fritz Gutmann refused to sign papers ceding his art collection to the Reich and was beaten to death. Louise was sent to Auschwitz. She died in the gas chambers two weeks later.

"You ask did they kill, yes they killed. They killed for art, when it suited them. There were other cases like that." Gutmann's heir have found some of the missing paintings in America, and are now involved in a lawsuit over them.

"If nothing else my family's case has catalysed something in a manner I certainly never thought it would," Bondi continues. "But then I'm told that's because I know nothing about art, but this is politics of art. I was taught about the Medici's" — he shrugs and laughs — "I should have known."

Should the grand jury return the painting to the Bondi family, what will be done with it is undecided. Henry Bondi is not an heir to his aunt's collection, and, he says, the decision about what to do with it rests with the heirs. "Of course," he teases, "I have my own opinion on it." His opinion touches on an irony that adds the perfect twist to the story. It is likely to please English readers, and to surprise perhaps everyone: "Well," he laughs, "my aunt in one of her letters said: before they behaved so badly, I was going to give it to the Austrian government. Now, I shall give it to the Tate, because they've been so wonderful to me."

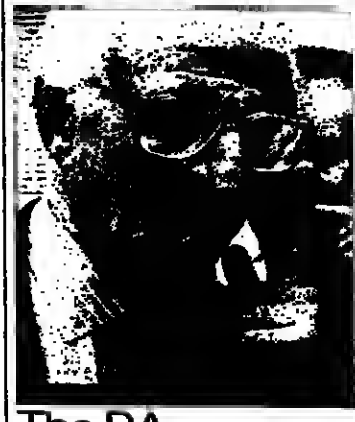
The Schiele exhibition, without the two disputed paintings, opens at the Picasso Museum, Barcelona, on Monday.



The artist... was arrested for kidnapping and rape and convicted of disseminating pornography



The collector... has more of Schiele's paintings than anyone else in the world



The DA... issued a subpoena preventing the works returning to Vienna

Various small advertisements and notices on the right margin, including lottery tickets and local business ads.







Winter Olympics Games

# Cretier gold as Maier takes a flier

Pete Nichols sees a customs officer bridge 30-year gap for French in Hakuba

JEAN-LUC CRETIER, a French customs officer, upset the mighty Austrian skier, and the favourite Hermann Maier in particular, when his first major downhill victory coincided with an Olympic gold medal run on the Heppo-one piste yesterday.

It would be a disservice to call Cretier an outsider since beyond the pre-emptive Austrians the 31-year-old was always going to be there on the podium. But his success was largely unheralded and ended a 30-year gap without a French victory since Jean-Claude Killy won the Alpine blue ribbon in Grenoble.

After three bad weather postponements and further delays yesterday after anxiety over crosswinds, the drama unfolded swiftly when Cretier, third out of the hut, had a dream descent to establish the benchmark. Recognised as one of the top skiers on the downhill slopes, he crossed the line in 1min 50.11sec.

Only 24th in Lillehammer four years ago, it was comfortably the most emphatic run of his skiing life. "I have fast skis," he said, "and I know I will have loved that, but, for once, it was probably close to the truth. Salomon skis have so auspicious record in Japan; they like the snow, apparently."

But there was no talk of Cretier as a potential winner until shortly after the fourth skier pushed off from the top. Maier, with 10 World Cup wins under his belt this winter, had been showing such daring in the training runs, attempting angles that no other skier would risk, that expectation was running high, even after a unhappy slalom run in the combined event.

Many believed the former bricklayer had three golds within his grasp. Now he has only today's Super-G to make amends. For when Maier began his descent down the mountain, he took the wind with him. After barely 15 seconds, he flew off a ramp

and could not change direction in the air. He ripped through the two lines of safety netting, somersaulted and landed on the back of his neck at a speed in excess of 70mph. He then rotated again into the soft snow.

The microphone in the starting hut picked up the voice of Christian Ghedina. "He can't even fly properly," said the race-hardened Italian. Maier took a moment to gather himself. He felt his legs, fumbled around for his other stick, then skied tentatively away. Later he withdrew from the afternoon's downhill section of the combined. He is human, after all.

"I was very fast and there was a lot of wind. I went up in the air and was looking at the sky," he said. "I looked down at the snow and waited for the crash." Luca Cattaneo's medal hopes ended at the same tight corner where Maier crashed. The programme was again delayed as the Italian was taken by helicopter to hospital with an injured leg.

Lasse Kjus came closest to Cretier's time, but the Norwegian has made a habit of coming close to everyone. Since winning the Olympic combined title in 1994, he has become the Alpine bridesmaid. He finished exactly half a second behind Cretier with Austria's Hans Trinkl taking the bronze. Later, not surprisingly, Kjus took silver in the combined behind Mario Reiter of Austria.

Britain's Graham Bell acquitted himself well in 23rd place, his highest Olympic placing. Just by competing in Japan, the 32-year-old made history by becoming the first British skier to race in five consecutive Olympic downhills.

The Scot Andrew Freshwater, the British No.1, flopped out after missing an early gate. "The skiers were warned," said Bell, "that the wind would, and took to their heels." Of the 43 starters 15 failed to finish.

Ice hockey got serious and in the first round of the competition proper Canada beat the qualifiers Belarus 5-1 (Wayne Gretzky played but did not score) and Sweden, the defending champions, defeated the United States 4-2. The Japanese supporters looked as shell-shocked as the Americans.



A son of France rises... Jean-Luc Cretier takes a leap towards his Olympic downhill gold

PHOTOGRAPH: LUCA BRUNO

Athletics

# Greene for go on records and rulers

Duncan Mackay

MAURICE GREENE, the world 100 metres champion, will be hoping to shake off jet lag to ensure the final event organised by the insolvent British Athletic Federation goes off with a flourish when he competes in the Bupa Indoor Grand Prix in Birmingham tomorrow.

The American, who has tied and broken the world record for 60m this season, is due to arrive in England this afternoon after competing in New York's Millrose Games last night. But Greene is so confident after running 6.39 seconds in Madrid last month to take 0.02 off Andre Cason's six-year-old world record, he believes he is capable of almost anything.

There is a precedent for breaking a world record after a transatlantic journey. In 1994 Leroy Burrell ran 9.85 in a 100m in Lausanne less than eight hours after stepping off a flight from Houston.

"I'm trying to break the world record every chance I get," Greene said. "I am in a zone where I feel unstoppable, where nothing can beat me. I have no fear of anybody. Who

ever lines up against me is in trouble. I should always win." Ian Stewart, the promotions officer of the BAF who is due to be made redundant, has pulled out all the stops to stage potentially the best indoor event of the season.

There are also high hopes of a world record in the 200m where Ethiopia's Haile Gebrselassie will chase Eamonn Coghlan's 11-year-old mark of 4min 54.07sec. Sergei Bubka, the Ukrainian pole vaulter who has set 35 world records, is also competing.

API, the company underwriting the costs of the meeting, will be hoping in claiming do not succeed in claiming the \$30,000 (about £12,500) world-record bonus on offer because it has insured for only two being broken.

The best chance of success surely lies at the feet of Gebrselassie, the tiny Ethiopian who at the age of 24 has set 11 world records. En route to his 3000m world record in Karlsruhe last month, Gebrselassie clocked a split at two-thirds distance of 45.57.

Britain's Duane Ladefogues, the reigning European outdoor 400m champion, withdrew yesterday because of a hamstring problem.

Sport in brief

Snooker

Peter McCullagh, lowest-ranked professional on the circuit this season, knocked out the former world champion Joe Johnson in Aberdeen yesterday to reach the last 64 of the Royal Scottish Open.

This was only his second win of the season outside qualifying tournaments. "Until this season I'd not been used to playing at the final stages," said the 29-year-old from Essex. "I'm also playing now for money each match and that's also something of a new experience."

Basketball

England have little practice time and one warm-up game against Austria in Vienna on Monday week — before they attempt to turn their European Championship campaign around against Belarus in Minsk and Israel at the Nynex Arena. "The circumstances to prepare for such important games have not been ideal," says their coach Laszlo Nemeth.

Ice Hockey

# Cobras on the carpet

Vic Batchelder

NEWCASTLE Cobras' assistant coach and defence-man Chris Norton was banned for two games yesterday. He is the sixth of their players charged with physically or verbally abusing a match official this season.

Vidale of Sunday's game against Basingstoke showed Norton knocking the linesman Graham Horner to the ice and causing a whiplash injury to his neck. The disciplinary committee described Norton's actions as "avoidable, unnecessary and reckless". He misses tonight's home game with Cardiff and tomorrow's at Ayr.

The Cobras have already had a written warning about their disciplinary record and such important games have not been ideal," says their coach Laszlo Nemeth. Basingstoke expect to have Andre Racicot in goal against Manchester tonight. He was part of Montreal Canadiens' Stanley Cup-winning side in 1993-94.

# Ayr programme

TONY PALEY	TOP FORM
1.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
2.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
3.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
4.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
5.05 Valley Victory	Valley Victory

1.50 MARTINIAN NOVICE HURDLE	2m 22.45 (8 declared)
1.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
2.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
3.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
4.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
5.05 Valley Victory	Valley Victory

2.25 EDINBURGH WOOLLEN MILLS NOVICE CHASE	2m 51.10 (25,704 declared)
1.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
2.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
3.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
4.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
5.05 Valley Victory	Valley Victory

2.55 STRATHKERR NOVICE HURDLE HANDICAP 4YO	2m 22.70 (8 declared)
1.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
2.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
3.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
4.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
5.05 Valley Victory	Valley Victory

3.30 MASON ORGANISATION HANDICAP CHASE	3m 11.07 (91 declared)
1.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
2.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
3.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
4.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
5.05 Valley Victory	Valley Victory

Results	NEWBURY
1.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
2.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
3.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
4.50 Valley Victory	Valley Victory
5.05 Valley Victory	Valley Victory

KEEPING TRACK	0891 222 +
NEWBURY	771
AYR	772
CATTICK	773
MARKET RASEN	774
LINGFIELD	775

ALL COURSES COMMENTARY 0891 222 780  
ALL COURSES RESULTS 0891 222 780  
TheGuardian INTERACTIVE

# Curling hopes waved goodbye

THE British men's curling team failed to reach the Olympic semi-finals when they lost 6-3 to the United States in Karuizawa.

States in Karuizawa. Britain's women will meet the favourites Canada for a place in the final.

# Weekend fixtures

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE	First Division
Crewe v Portsmouth (a-t)	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	

Second Division	Blackpool v Millwall
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	

Third Division	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

Fourth Division	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

League Cup	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

FA Cup	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

TENNIS SCOTTISH CUP	Fourth round
Hearts v Kilmarnock	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

Scottish League	First Division
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	

Second Division	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

Third Division	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

Fourth Division	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

League Cup	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

FA Cup	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

GM VAUXHALL CONFERENCE	Fourth round
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	

Scottish League	First Division
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	

Second Division	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

Third Division	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

Fourth Division	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

League Cup	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

FA Cup	Sheff Wed v Huddersfield
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	
Man City v Arsenal	
Sheff Wed v Huddersfield	

West Indies v England

# Caddick

West Indies 98

Meet our expert in the field

West Indies 98











FA Cup fifth round

David Lacey looks for the weekend's likely winners and warns of Barnsley threat to Alex Ferguson's out-of-form favourites

# Fixtures fear as United chase Treble

IN ENGLISH football the Treble presents as big a challenge as the Double. For more than half the 20th century, winning the championship and the FA Cup in the same season was regarded as the stuff of dreams. Now another prestigious prize, the Champions League, represents the supreme test of a team's talent and durability.

Twenty-one years ago Manchester United denied Liverpool a unique triple triumph when they beat them in the 1977 FA Cup final. Bob Paisley's team were Football League champions and four days later they won the Euro-

pean Cup for the first time, but at Wembley Tommy Docherty's unfancied United side got the better of them 2-1.

No team has come close to the Treble since, although in 1984 Liverpool did the next best thing by winning the league, the League Cup and the Champions Cup, and achieving the feat is now a complex business involving more European fixtures and a careful balancing of priorities at home and abroad.

True, the domestic league programme has been reduced from 42 matches to 38 but the demands on players going for all three trophies still make it highly unlikely that the

English game will see a Treble this side of the millennium, and probably not at all if a European league proper goes under way.

Having completed the Double twice in three seasons United may have given a passing thought to going on further this time, but in reality their manager Alex Ferguson is not looking far beyond winning the Champions League and retaining the Premiership title.

In the FA Cup a comprehensive win at Chelsea followed by an easy home win against Walsall have offered United the prospect of a fourth final in five seasons, and with a

fifth-round tie at home to Barnsley tomorrow it remains an offer Old Trafford finds difficult to refuse.

But the further United go in the competition the greater will be the threat of the fixture congestion Ferguson is keen to avoid.

As it is, United are about to play three Premiership games in 11 days before they go to Monaco for the opening leg of their Champions League quarter-final on March 4. The match at West Ham they were due to play this afternoon having to be rescheduled. The worst thing Barnsley could do to United tomorrow is not to beat them

but to force a replay that would take the sides back to Old Trafford.

Danny Wilson's team might, just might, do better than that against a United side lacking the suspended Paul Scholes and Nicky Butt, and doubtful about the fitness of David Beckham and Andy Cole.

There is also the matter of the champions' recent form, three defeats in five Premiership matches and a scrambled draw against Bolton. Either way a repeat of United's 7-0 frolic past Barnsley at the end of October is unlikely.

Arsenal and Leeds should win their home ties against

Crystal Palace and Birmingham City. Palace will visit Highbury tomorrow still chastened by the 3-0 defeat against Wimbledon last Monday which has brought a third relegation from the Premiership that much closer. Birmingham will be without the suspended Paul Furlong at Elland Road today.

West Ham are looking an increasingly good FA Cup bet and Blackburn Rovers may do well to force a replay at Upton Park. Only Arsenal have lost as few league matches as Rovers but Roy Hodgson may have to manage without Tim Flowers in goal and Stuart Ripley on the right

## Fans score own gull

### Football Diary

Martin Thorpe

NON-league Fareham are issuing supporters with free umbrellas — not to keep fans dry in the rain but to protect them from pigeon and seagull droppings. In other words, to stop the s\*\*\* hitting the fan.

Scores of birds have made their home in the Hampshire club's stand and the club have been forced to take action.

"I know it's supposed to be good luck to have a bird dropping on your shoulder but this is a bit much," said the Fareham chairman Chris Solen. "It really is a problem and it can be quite messy when we have both sets of birds in the stand. I think they're using it as a target range. After looking at various ideas, broomies seem like the best solution."

But the club are not crying foul about having all these birds in the corner. "On a night out I'd worry about being ewed," said Solen. "They are welcome to stay there as long as they like."

Bombs away.

IT IS a hard life being a professional player. Take Tranmere's Mickey Mellon. "On a night out I'd probably put on black trousers and a white shirt. You have to wear labels at a football club, otherwise you get slaughtered. So I wear Armani and Boss mainly."

AND who says Hartlepool United are a dull northern club full of hairy-legged coppers? The Third Division outfit has just given a trial to the French striker Habib Sissoko who, before becoming a professional footballer, was hand-picked by the top French designer Paco Rabanne to model on the Paris catwalk.

"Paco saw me in Paris and asked me to do a show for him," says Sissoko modestly. "I enjoyed it but football is more important."

There is more. A Norwegian called Thomas Lind recently spent three days on trial at Hartlepool. Back home he is a hairdresser.

NOT only have Chelsea now employed the first Italian manager in the Premiership after previously taking on the first Dutchman but after employing the first black manager, they have now gone to the other extreme with the first shaved head.

LAST week's Match of the Day claimed that the viewer who picked the Goal of the Month one-two-three would receive a prize of two tickets to see the winning scorer play "in a top Premiership match". Given that Georgi Kinkladze's goal against West Ham is a very likely winner, the victorious viewer might have to wait a while for his or her prize.

COLCHESTER United have just signed the defender Guy Branston on loan from Leicester City. Fans immediately rallied the idea of signing up guns such as "Branston aims to get U's out of a pickle."

But even that was topped by news that Branston has just attracted a kit sponsor — none other than Croese and Blackwell, who make the pickle.

AFTER finishing bottom in a recent survey of refreshments at football grounds, Leyton Orient's catering manager Mark Pickering has promised to make changes to the club's match-day food. "Yes," he says, "we won't be using Colman's mustard any more."

THE Hampshire cricketer Shaun Udal has been keeping fit this winter by playing football for the Basingstoke Sunday League Division Five side Highdown, scoring an impressive 12 goals in eight games.

But he is not playing any more. The Hampshire vice-captain has just been banned for 35 days after picking up two red cards in two weeks, one for swearing at the referee and the second for violent conduct. But he did have the perfect excuse. "I hadn't actually realised that swearing was a sending-off offence," he offered.

PREDICTABLY, Ruud Gullit was attacked at his weakest point — the back.

### Arsenal v Crystal Palace

Last meeting: Oct 18 1997 Crystal Palace 0, Arsenal 0 Premiership

In the Premiership Crystal Palace have a better away record than Manchester United but it is difficult to see Arsenal slipping up at Highbury tomorrow, even with David Seaman still out and Tony Adams suspended. Arsenal have won seven of their last eight at Port Vale in the third round and the combination of Dennis Bergkamp and Marc Overmars should be too much for a Palace team out of form and weakened by injuries.

Forecast: Arsenal 3, Crystal Palace 1

### Aston Villa v Coventry City

Last meeting: December 6, 1997 Aston Villa 3, Coventry City 0 Premiership

Recent results suggest that Coventry, with three straight wins behind them and Don Dublin in striking form, should not lose this West Midlands Villa bucked themselves up sufficiently to end Derby County's unbeaten home record and while they have Ian Taylor suspended today Coventry are missing Paul Williams, Noel Whelan and Paul Teffer. The outcome could depend on Dwight Yorke's fitness.

Forecast: Aston Villa 1, Coventry City 2

### Leeds United v Birmingham City

Last meeting: Feb 25 1996 Leeds United 3, Birmingham City 0 Coca-Cola Cup semi-final, second leg, agg 5-1

So far Leeds United's FA Cup progress has been serene. No sign yet of the sort of fatality that saw Reading knock them out of the Coca-Cola Cup at Elland Road in November. The form Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink showed in Leeds through to the quarter-finals today but if Birmingham start hitting the target as regularly as in recent games against Stoke and Stockport the contest will be closer than expected.

Forecast: Leeds United 2, Birmingham City 0

### Manchester Utd v Barnsley

Last meeting: Oct 25 1997 Manchester United 7, Barnsley 0 Premiership

Barnsley were savaged at Old Trafford before Christmas but United have not been in a saving mood lately. Today they will be without the suspended Nicky Butt and Paul Scholes while David Beckham and Andy Cole are doubtful with the strains that kept them out of the England team on Wednesday. Add to that the fact that Barnsley have lost only twice in nine games, playing exceptionally well to knock out Tottenham, and there are the makings of a surprise.

Forecast: Manchester United 1, Barnsley 1

### Newcastle Utd v Tranmere Rovers

Last meeting: April 4 1992 Newcastle United 2, Tranmere Rovers 3 Old Second Division

Tranmere have yet to get beyond this stage of the FA Cup and if Alan Shearer continues to rediscover his old sharpness near goal things should stay that way. Not that this tie is a foregone conclusion. Newcastle have sold most of their players who could pass the ball imaginatively and in the last round Tranmere knocked out Sunderland against the odds. An away win today is unlikely, a replay at Prenton Park a possibility.

Forecast: Newcastle United 1, Tranmere Rovers 0

### West Ham Utd v Blackburn Rovers

Last meeting: Dec 20 1997 Blackburn 3, West Ham 0 Premiership

This looks the best tie of the round. West Ham have been omnipresent at Upton Park, winning 13 games out of 16, but sides have cup traditions and the quality of their 3-0 victory at Sheffield Wednesday in the fourth round marked them out as potential FA Cup finalists. Then again, Tottenham's 3-0 win at Wood Park will have encouraged similar thoughts at West Ham. Much will rest on whether John Hartson and Chris Sutton take their chances.

Forecast: West Ham United 2, Blackburn Rovers 1

### Wimbledon v Wolverhampton W

Last meeting: April 20 1985 Wimbledon 1, Wolverhampton Wanderers 1 Old Second Division

Staying in the Premiership is as much a preoccupation for Wimbledon as reaching it is a priority at Molineux. Yet both sides have cup traditions to preserve and a mutual lack of striking power could send this tie back to the Black Country for a replay. But in the previous round Wolves did eventually beat Charlton 3-0 after drawing at The Valley and Carl Leaburn, the former Charlton striker signed by Wimbledon in an emergency, is Cup-tied.

Forecast: Wimbledon 0, Wolverhampton Wanderers 0

## Redfearn revels in late chance to prove his worth

Trevor Haylett on the Barnsley talisman making the most of his Premiership season

WHEN Neil Redfearn said this week that players are never more dangerous than when they have something to prove, he was referring to his struggle to gain recognition for his talents and not tomorrow's FA Cup tie which takes Barnsley back to Old Trafford.

Yet it is hard to conceive a greater incentive than the memory that one's last visit to play Manchester United ended in a seven-goal defeat, the most chastening experience of a debut Premiership season likely to end with Barnsley's return to the First Division. That being so, their captain will leave the stage having proved a point.

Redfearn has shown by his consistent performances and by his goals that his time at the top was long overdue; that at 32 he could more than hold his own among more dazzling personalities who might be inclined to snigger at a CV that includes time served at Lincoln and Doncaster.

Without the Tykes' talisman it would have been Tottenham, not Barnsley, pulling up outside Old Trafford tomorrow. It was Redfearn's replay at White Hart Lane equaliser that ensured a fourth-round replay and a dramatic night of FA Cup football in which he moved into double figures and laid on both his side's other goals in a 3-1 win.

Redfearn's value as a midfielder equally adept at winning tackles, creating openings for team-mates or finishing off moves with the instincts of a born scorer is being acknowledged after he was seemingly for ever on the brink of a breakthrough.

The twin disappointments of Redfearn experienced at Oldham in a losing FA Cup semi-final side — United beat them in a replay — and of missing a Littlewoods Cup final appearance because he was cup-tied, were nothing compared to the blow at the start of the 1991-92 season.

After helping Joe Royle's team achieve promotion with 14 goals, including the last-gasp penalty against Sheffield Wednesday that gave them the title, he was denied the opportunity to prove himself in the top grade because of a dispute with his manager.

"I had been playing in a midfield three with the freedom to break forward and to push me wide on the right. We had a clash of views because I thought I had done more than most to win promotion and because I rated myself better than players the manager brought in."

A readiness to match his forceful ways on the pitch with a determination to argue

his corner in the manager's office had earlier been behind short-lived spells with Crystal Palace and Watford before the transfer trail lured him to Boundary Park.

"Apart from Barnsley it seems I have had a run-in with all my clubs," said Redfearn. "When I left Oldham I had a point to prove and in that situation players are dangerous. When they have something to play for they become good players."

"I've always thought I could do a good job at the top level side — United beat them in a replay to prove and in that situation players are dangerous. When they have something to play for they become good players."

"It's been a difficult season but even though we are bottom of the table we haven't lost touch with the sides above us. When we went to Old Trafford in October we played well for 20 minutes and then gave a silly goal away. A second soon followed and when you give top-class players the chance to relax, they are always likely to play you off the park."

Redfearn believes that if Barnsley overcome United to follow up their success over Spurs they will deserve to be given the Cup there and then. They held it once before in 1912, an achievement that was overshadowed by the sinking of the Titanic a few days before.

As the story of that disaster plays to full-house cinema audiences around the country, it would be an appropriate time to win the trophy again.



Tough at the top... Redfearn has shone in a side that looks likely to lose a struggle for survival. PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD MANN

### Liverpool's join contest for Stam

LIVERPOOL have confirmed that they want to sign Jupp Stamatidis, the PSV defender.

"We are interested in the player, we keep looking at him because he is one of the best defenders in Europe," their manager Roy Evans said yesterday. "He's strong, he's decent in the air, he's a good defender, but as far as money is concerned there have been no exchanges between the clubs."

Liverpool have rejected an offer from West Ham to take the centre-back Neil Ruddock to Upton Park on a pay-as-you-play basis.

Spanish and Italian clubs have agreed to take part in the Intertoto Cup for the first time after UEFA came up with a new knock-out format for the much-criticised summer competition.

One English club is likely to participate for the first time since three English clubs appeared under duress in the first Intertoto held under UEFA auspices in 1965.

The cup will provide three teams with a place in the 1998-99 UEFA Cup and 45 federations, Scotland are one of five countries not competing — will enter teams.

### A N Other

STRONG in the air, alert and mobile on the ground, this striking product of scientific research was illustrated by his paltry half-dozen international caps. Over a period of nine years among sticky combatives he averaged a goal in almost every other game. His scoring rate dropped when he struck out along a major road but to the end of his career, which later took in spells among red and yellow nesters, he was always a problem for defenders.

Last week: Roger Byrne (Manchester United).



Performance of the week: Kasey Keller (Leicester City), whose inspired goalkeeping in Los Angeles did so much to help the United States achieve their historic victory over Brazil in the Concacaf Gold Cup.

## Busy Robson faces fight to land Colombia striker

Don Best

THE Middlesbrough manager Bryan Robson looks set to sign the strikers Marco Branca from Internazionale and Alun Armstrong from Stockport but faces competition from Sheffield United for the Colombia marksman Hamilton Ricard.

After Boro had confirmed the £2 million signing of Ricard, United claimed last night that they had signed him first. The chairman at Bramall Lane, Mike McDonald, insisted: "We have an agreement that Ricard will join us subject to a work permit."

Boro are also waiting for a permit for the 24-year-old international and Robson, who spent three days in Colombia this week talking to Ricard and his club Deportivo Cali, said: "We have signed him. He was ready to come back with me until I told him he needed a work permit first. I expect him here in three weeks."

Ricard, however, was in Sheffield last month for a medical and United claimed that they had agreed a £3m deal with his club.

Branca, meanwhile, is poised to join Boro in a £1.5m deal and may be in the side before Ricard arrives on Teesside — if he ever does. Robson revealed yesterday that the 33-year-old Branca is ready to sign. "We're talking to Marco and we're very close," he said.

The Armstrong signing, for £1.6m, is also imminent after Stockport turned down a £1.5m offer from Southampton. The 22-year-old is keen to return to his native North-east and Boro are unlikely to have trouble agreeing terms with the Gateshead-born player.

The Stockport manager Gary Megson is keen to hang on to Armstrong but concedes that with his contract running out in the summer the club have to cash in while they can. Megson has already used part of any fee he receives from the sale of Armstrong by signing the midfielder Wayne Phillips from Wrexham.

Luís Hernandez scored 15 minutes into extra-time as Mexico advanced to the final of the Concacaf Gold Cup on the "golden goal" rule after beating Jamaica 1-0 in Los Angeles. In tomorrow's final Mexico will face the United States, who beat the world champions Brazil 1-0 in the first semi-final.

The Chile striker Marcelo Salas signed for Lazio yesterday for £13m. The deal keeps Salas, who scored both goals against England at Wembley on Wednesday, with the Italian club until 2006.

The Football Association is to take no action against Portsmouth following the pitch attack on the linesman Edward Martin by a Sheffield United supporter two weeks ago.

There were criticisms after the game about the level of stewarding and the small police presence at Fratton Park. But after an investigation into the attack, which left Martin in hospital, the FA announced that they would not take the matter further.

Patrick Glenn

RANGERS' unimpressive recent form gives them a vulnerable look as they travel to Motherwell in the Cup. The champions meet opponents capable of securing good results against the Old Firm.

Motherwell, who lost their manager Alex McLeish to Hibernian on Wednesday, suffered their first defeat by Rangers in more than a year when they were unlucky to lose 1-0 Throx four weeks ago. But the Fir Park side drew their two previous meetings with Rangers and have also drawn with Celtic this season. They are likely to present a formidable test even without a manager.

Andy Watson, the coach in temporary charge said: "The business with Hibs was done on Wednesday when the players were off, and by the next day they were concentrating on facing Rangers. Alex's leaving may make them feel they have to start to prove something to the manager, who will be coming in."

Watson has virtually a full squad from which to choose, as has the Throx manager Walter

### Tennents Scottish Cup fourth-round preview

Motherwell pose formidable test for wobbly Rangers

Smith now that the goalkeeper Andy Goram has recovered from bronchitis and the defender Alex Cleland completed a three-match suspension.

"Teams who realise they have no chance of winning the league are convinced they can do well in the cup," said Smith. "Look at Kilmarnock and Falkirk in last year's final. Motherwell will give themselves a chance and they've already done well enough against us to leave nobody in any doubt about what's ahead of us."

The holders Kilmarnock meet Avy United at Somerset Park in what seems certain to be a hairy match. The Rugby Park manager Bobby Williamson said the tie was so important to the locals that defeat could leave him contemplating a leap into the river.

Celtic, joint favourites for the trophy with Rangers, meet Dunfermline at East End Park on Monday and in the tie involving other Premier Division sides, expect Hearts to beat Albion Rovers. Dundee United to eliminate Caley Thistle and St Johnstone to take care of Stirling Albion. All three are at home.





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## The Battle of Stamford Bridge

# Ruud awakens to a 'conspiracy'



**Paul Hayward**  
hears a very different account of the events at Chelsea that led to Gullit's dismissal

**M**ONEY was a side issue in the coup d'état that brought down Ruud Gullit. The act of regicide — or perhaps reggae-cide — was planned up to a month ago as the Chelsea board lined up Gianluca Vialli as Gullit's replacement.

Reliable sources connected with the club say Gullit's demand for a huge salary increase simply provided the board with an excuse to act against an employee they felt they could no longer control. At an absorbing two-hour press conference yesterday Gullit himself suggested that he had been forced out of Stamford Bridge by an elaborate conspiracy. "They had everything planned behind my back," he said.

There were many theories about why an anti-Gullit movement should have developed but one authoritative source suggests that Gullit's assistant Gwyn Williams and coach Graham Rix had become insecure about their own futures and were pressing the board to force Gullit to come to a decision over his unsigned contract. Rix is said to have known three weeks ago that Gullit faced the sack.

Much credence is also lent to the theory that a small cabal of senior, mostly foreign players were on the point of rebelling against Gullit's dictatorial methods and rotating squad system, and that the Chelsea chairman Ken Bates was determined to stop him becoming too powerful. In short Gullit had become too

big for Bates to handle and Vialli was seen as a more malleable successor with equally strong connections among Europe's leading players.

There are also dark mutterings about Williams and Rix having to do most of the work in coaching and preparing the team as Gullit became increasingly aloof. Yesterday Gullit assembled the full force of his own managerial team from the agency First Artist as his answers were broadcast live on Sky News in the style of some great political drama.

Gullit has begun to believe that his removal had been planned long before it was announced. He had been trying to sign Brian Laudrup from Rangers and said yesterday: "Zola and Vialli met up with Laudrup [in London] on Wednesday. The player was surprised. What I've heard is that Laudrup asked where I was and was told 'he's busy doing other things'." Zola and Roberto Di Matteo, Chelsea's third illustrious Italian, recently signed new contracts.

Gullit's account was disputed by the club's managing director Colin Hutchinson, who said there was "nothing sinister" about Vialli and Zola meeting Laudrup.

"Chelsea didn't even want to negotiate with me; they didn't even make me an offer," Gullit said. "I asked for £3 million. If they'd made me an offer I would have accepted it. That's how negotiations work. You give a bit and lose a bit. I had already made my negotiating position weak



In defence... Gullit spent two hours putting his side of the story to the press yesterday

by telling them I wanted to stay at Chelsea. The money is not the real reason. It's the stick they wanted to hit me with."

This account supports the theory that it was not greed which brought him down. David Mellor, though, claimed that Gullit had asked for "a truly horrific sum of money", whereas Hutchinson went on Clubcall to claim that Gullit had actually demanded £2 million net, which equates to £3.2 million gross. Mellor is a close ally of Bates.

Hutchinson claimed: "Ruud, who is a master of the media, very craftily said today that he asked for £2 million. He did ask for £2 million

and I immediately responded and said: 'Gross?' And he said: 'No, netto. I always talk netto.'"

"For Ruud to receive £2 million a year in his hand means that the club has got to pay tax on it. With his basic salary, and the rest, we were looking at a commitment of £3,365,000 a year to keep Ruud. At the end of the day it did come down to money."

Gullit was always versatile on the pitch, and at the International Sportsman's Club in London was impressive in attack and defence. He needed to swing the pendulum of public opinion back towards him and succeeded by flattery the media, players and fans

while attacking those who had fired him. "I'm very disappointed that I didn't hear it from Chelsea first and I'm disappointed that it happened behind my back."

"I gave this club a lot and my relationship with the players was okay. The rotational system was unusual but it worked. I was always in contact with my players. If Zola isn't playing well and I drop him then you have to go to [the Italy coach Cesare] Maldini also and ask him why he's dropped Zola. I've been treated very badly after all

I've done for the club."

For Gullit, left feeling "a little empty", there could be one final indignity. Chelsea still hold his player's registration until the end of June. First they sacked him. Now, in theory, they could sell him too.

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

## Caddick bowls over the West Indies

**A**NDY CADDICK and Angus Fraser silenced carnival-like celebrations at Queen's Park Oval yesterday in two dramatic bowling spells after West Indies captain Brian Lara looked to be putting England to the sword on the first day of the vital third Test in Trinidad.

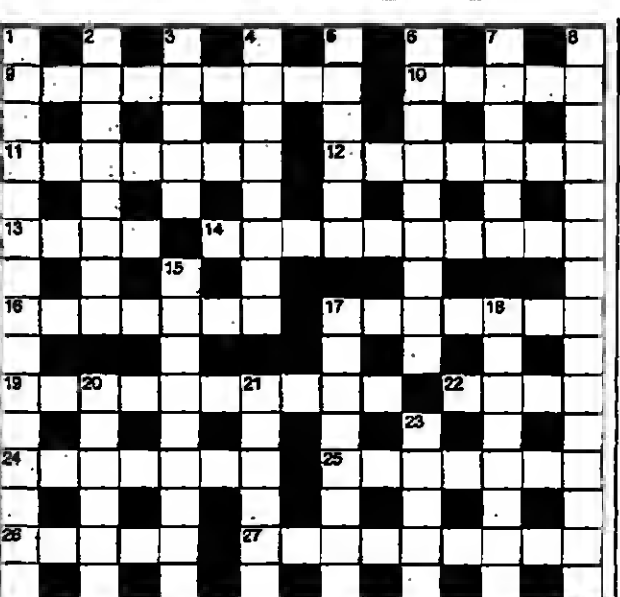
Fraser's initial breakthrough came from 18 deliveries at a cost only four runs as Lara and the opener Sherwin Campbell launched a post-lunch assault. From 93 for one, the Middlesex pacer inspired a complete turnaround as West Indies stumbled to 100 for four.

Fraser, who had match figures of 11 for 110 in the second Test, sent back Campbell and Carl Hooper in successive overs, but the real prize was Lara. He had made 43 from 53 balls when an uncontrolled pull saw the wicketkeeper Jack Russell scoop up a bottom edge. The third umpire Clyde Camberbatch confirmed the catch had carried.

After tea, Caddick hit a purple patch to send back Jimmy Adams. David Williams, Curtly Ambrose and Kenny Benjamin as the score plummeted from 132 for four to 140 for eight. Fraser then took his tally to five by removing Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Nixon McLean to close out the innings on 158.

Full reports, page 21

## Guardian COLLINS Prize Crossword No 21,198



Set by Araucaria

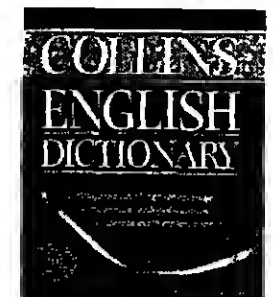
- Across**
- 9 Meson, something at ten to the pound? (1-4)
  - 10 Two rings after forty winks is no good (5)
  - 11 One having a row with Norma, as ordered (7)
  - 12 Student, provided he's upper class, should go far (4-3)
  - 13,22 Find record completed (9)
  - 14,16 Big book on the hair/break at pub next morning may carry away the man in the street (5,7,7)
  - 17 Lady Turner in trick in Atalanta's place (7)
  - 18,27 Dr. No's disapproval more

- then enough for a friend to bring out favour (10,9)
- 22 See 13
  - 24 Birds' nest's base: it takes rodents (7)
  - 25 Officer with important part to speak (7)
  - 26 End of poem for ten voices (5)
  - 27 See 19
- Down**
- 1,8 Offer medal to ex officio meritment maker and developer (6,9,3,5,6)
  - 2 Defence of cockney musician (6 for George) (6)
  - 3 Orator's place after out (5)
  - 4 One is so capable with prickles (5)
  - 5 Writer with political allies keeping a high line (6)

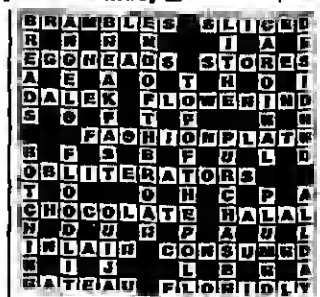
A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to The Guardian Crossword, P.O. Box 14841, London, EC1R 3JX, or Fax to 0171 713 4735 by first post on Friday Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday February 23.

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

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- 6 Awfully fine story is beyond words (9)
- 7 Make drunk, going round quietly, sound funny when hitting water (6)
- 8 See 1
- 15 African country, unless I see you first? (9)
- 17 African food for fellow American having business



- 18 with the British (8)
- 19 Drake, say, aged four hundred million (8)
- 20 Countryman, a model among the simple (6)
- 21 It's an advantage to the debtor to get stuff off the bed (6)
- 23 Gather from a different angle (5)

**CROSSWORD SOLUTION 21,197**

with the British (8)  
Drake, say, aged four hundred million (8)  
Countryman, a model among the simple (6)  
It's an advantage to the debtor to get stuff off the bed (6)  
Gather from a different angle (5)



**David Lacey**

## Pay-TV may prove a pipe dream for all but the best

**F**OR football viewers pay-TV is just around the corner, like a mugger-in-waiting. It is, we are assured, all part of the digital television revolution which will bring 500 channels to the fingertips and enable fans to follow their teams live from armchairs.

Those unable to get in at Old Trafford will slot in a smart card, press a button and watch Manchester United without fear of being clubbed if they stand up.

Arsenal, Liverpool and, on a good day, Chelsea will be seen by a hidden audience of millions. Newcastle United, too, unless Kenny Dalglish man-

ages to wipe out the waiting list in the meantime.

So much for the theory. The reality might be less dramatic. Imagine, for instance, last Monday's Sky offering from Selhurst Park going out on pay-per-view. By half-time these still watching Crystal Palace and Wimbledon would have been keener on pay-per-viewer and demanding their money back.

It was not the poorest game of football seen on Murdochvision this season. A latter-day Winston Smith, locked in Room 101 with the worst thing in the world, would be reduced to a gibbering wreck by watching a repeat of Wimbledon's match at Leicester.

Nevertheless the opening 45 minutes on Monday night, during which the sum of the attacking efforts of both teams was represented by one shot on target, did suggest that, outside the big clubs, pay-TV might be a pipe-dream. Subscribers could have switched to Dinosaurs on the Disney Channel — "prehistoric fun with the buggable leviathans" — and seen much the same thing for less cost.

A channel-topper, coming across a football match in which the words "dire," "bent" and "fear" were being repeated at regular intervals could have been forgiven for thinking that this was an English voice-over coverage

from Uzbekistan. But these were merely players' names.

There had to be sympathy for the commentators. Sky football trailers are produced in the spirit of the Brick Bradford serials which used to hold the kids in thrall at Saturday-morning cinema clubs. Consequently every game has to be a cliff-hanger.

The skill with which the pundits conveyed their true feelings about the spectacle without chanting "what a load of rubbish" was impressive. We had "rather an untidy start". It was "never a match that threatened to produce a lot of goals".

After half-an-hour of numb nothingness the comments became bolder: "When the stakes are high you can't expect much pretty football, and we haven't had that!"

And then: "I don't think I've seen the ball given away so cheaply. The passing's poor."

The highlight of the first hour's viewing was, quite literally, a half-time commercial for Jason McAteer's hair. Andy Gray felt the problem was that both teams were too strong defensively for the weakened attacks. Were they 'eck as like!

Happily and hilariously, salvation was at hand in the shape of Valerian Ismael, a defender for whom Palace had just paid Strasbourg

£2.75 million, presumably on the assumption that he could actually defend. Carl Leaburn, on the other hand, had cost Wimbledon £300,000 from Charlton and he is more about cult than culture.

Leaburn got himself into a good position but couldn't quite finish, murmured one of the commentators in the first half, and that seemed to be the story of the player's life until he met Ismael. Three Wimbledon goals in 12 minutes, according to the Palace manager afterwards, was not the answer, so clearly they are not going to sign any Greeks.

Wimbledon still seem serious about going to Ireland, although up to half-time Ireland looked more appropriate.

More often than not football on Sky is highly watchable but last Monday the Weather Channel offered fewer deep depressions. And at least there is no danger of that going on pay-TV. Is there?

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